University of Alberta

Rediscovering Pedagogical Intent in Educational Leadership: Conversations with Uncertainty at the Limit Situation

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Department of Secondary Education

Edmonton, Alberta
Spring 2004

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Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-96646-1
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ISBN: 0-612-96646-1

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Abstract

This dissertation research explores the difficulty of remaining focused on children and their wellbeing as a form of faithfulness to pedagogical action during attempts at conflict resolution in today's highly charged educational leadership environments. The research is located in autobiographical narrative and is written and examined from the point of view of an educational leader and researcher whose twenty-two years of experiences in schools and school systems across Alberta and recently in British Columbia provide the necessary inquiry context. The question of pedagogical intent addresses this researcher through an attempt to surface and give play to the covert and the silent discourses that receive voice during moments of conflict between teachers, students, principals, parents, and the researcher as their educational leader.

The research approach is located in the philosophical hermeneutic tradition that utilizes conversation with text and life experience as inquiry. Narrative inquiry is used to phenomenologically capture, through autobiographical composites, the essences of thought, feeling, loyalty, action, and defense that operate through conflict in the life contexts of educators, and their students. These composite autobiographies are structured around reoccurring issues of student abuse, exclusion, and program placement. The narratives and discourses regarding pedagogy, childhood, curriculum, and globalization are placed into conversational play in order to understand ever differently and more deeply what about pedagogical intent addresses educational leaders as they strive to resolve conflict that involves children, their teachers and their school systems.

Throughout this study, some relevant understandings surfaced. Included is an understanding that educational leaders remain faithful to pedagogical intent by risking their loyalties to discourses, meta-narratives, and relations of power in order to remain focused on the wellbeing of children. There is an understanding of the way that "wellbeing" is articulated through practical wisdom and conversation. The initiating desire for conflict-free educational environments becomes understood as a naïve goal that denies the indeterminacy and ambiguity that exist in practices of pedagogy with its inherent requirement for struggle and openness. The dissertation closes with the thesis that pedagogical intent originates from and returns one to the child's presenting call for responsiveness.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my wife and educational colleague of 19 years, LeAnn Gail Masyk, for her determination and support, for the personal sacrifices she made in order that I could continue on this journey of pilgrimage and study over the past seven years, for the edits and thoughts that she contributed throughout this research, and most importantly for the continuous dialogue that we engaged in over what it means to be oriented towards children and their wellbeings. To my daughters, Devin and Teghan, for their sacrifices and encouragement, for their definite desire to see their father succeed, and for their reminder as children about what being custodial involves, I dedicate this study to them.

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Beatrice Rita Neumeier, an educational leader and educator of over 45 years. At the time of this writing she remains pedagogically dedicated to the service of children and to their learning needs. It is also dedicated to her father Michael Boyko who passed on his belief in education and the value that it offers to the quality of one's life.

This study is dedicated to my father for his capacity to surface the taken-for-granted and hidden discourses that structure people's relationships and that lose their interpretive possibilities without such attentiveness to both the said and the unsaid.

Concluding Preface

This research was initiated by a concern for the student who finds herself imbedded in problems bigger than she is, but who ends up in conflict with school authorities, school disciplinary practices, and school knowledge systems. It was initiated by a concern for the student who finds expression through failure, rebellion, dropping out; and for the student who is failed, punished, or excluded by a system that is empowered to "do unto others".

This research was grounded by my own experiences as an educator who has and still does contribute to the enactment of both existing and desired school cultures: An educator who legitimates certain ways of teaching and learning, and who excludes others. It is grounded by my experiences as an educator who sorts, sifts, and excludes some students while honoring the educative capacities of others.

This study was made possible by the self-reflection that occurred as a consequence of my own self-rupturings. These rupturings arose from my sense of frustration and failure in my pedagogical commitments to students as their teacher, their principal, their superintendent, and with my own children as their father. It was influenced by my doctoral studies and by many readings that have enabled an interpretation of pedagogical commitment as an orientation of thoughtfulness towards children, their wellbeing, and their potentialities.

This study was motivated by the hopefulness within those resonant cords that ring when I have felt, "Yes, I contributed to this child's life. I expanded this child's educative engagements; however, it was also necessitated by a professional ethic that reminds me that it is my responsibility to contribute, to be decent and caring in my contributions, and to remain faithful to children and to their presenting calls for relevance.

The personal rupturings that brought me to this research were made possible by lived-experiences that have been re-presented through autobiographical narrative as phenomenological presenting. I have been brought to this study by the shaking into wakefulness my own complacencies, and by a fresh awareness regarding my own pedagogical incompleteness. This awakening came about through my doctoral studies and readings: Studies that displaced pedagogical practice as a concern over things, techniques, and skills, by a concern over children, their teachers, and my own coming into pedagogical being. This awareness is informed by the philosophical hermeneutic tradition of inquiry.

The research question began as a quest for how one remains faithful to pedagogical intent during moments of conflict resolution: Moments when we reach the point at which our work with children appears to abrogate pedagogical intent. By remaining committed to this search, this question invoked others. The questions, "What about pedagogical intent addresses us during conflict situations?" and "What is it that pedagogical intent, itself, throws into question?" emerged through inquiry.

During this study, pedagogical intent came to be positioned as an ethical commitment of staying with the question. Although the desire was there to find easy answers, the ethical commitment, I think, remained. This was no easy task and it required much mentoring, questioning, and insightfulness provided by Dr. Terry Carson as my advisor, and Drs. Ingrid Johnston and David Smith, members of my committee.

A philosophical hermeneutic of inquiry became the entry point since this study was an ontological concern regarding the tendency of Being, itself, to settle on easy answers and to avoid the difficult search. I have only recently come to understand that such a quest ends in incompleteness and in becoming. What becomes apparent throughout this study is that pedagogical intent itself was being restored to its original difficulty, its ambiguity, and its incompleteness: Its own and my own throwness as an educational leader and researcher into the midst of a confluence of discourses such as childhood, curriculum, globalization, power and control, professionalism and expertise. The more difficult task for me to attempt to surface was my throwness into the midst of language, that is never neutral, but always present—an in-dwelling, as such, in language. Through hermeneutics I have come to understand that these discourses serve as fertile grounding that simultaneously restricts, and yet projects pedagogy forward.

The thesis that I have come to through this phenomenological, hermeneutic study is that if pedagogical intent is defined as an orientation of thoughtfulness towards children, then educational leaders remain faithful to this project when they remain committed to the process of understanding themselves as leaders ever more intensely, ever differently so that they can remain relevant to children's ever-changing calls for pedagogical responding.

This commitment is realized through a suspicion of personal identities that throws into question one's personal identifications with language itself, with discourses, and with grand narratives over and above children and their learning needs. This commitment is realized through personal risk-taking on another's behalf, and through the nurturance of practical wisdom. It is one of becoming pedagogic, and it remains incomplete, as we never escape our language, and as Gadamer (1960/1989) would remind us, our historically effected consciousness. All we hope to become is ever more aware and ever more capable of exercising personal responsibility or as Foucault (1980) would call it, personal agency.

Relevant to the needs of educational leadership, an understanding emerged throughout this study that there is a confluence of discourses present during conflict resolution, of which pedagogical intent is merely one. To remain faithful to this project of becoming pedagogical, the role of leadership is to ensure that the relevant learning needs or concerns of the child receive voice and attentive listening. What was initially understood as the political demands of the system, the organizational demands, the staff relational demands, and the demands of personal identities all have the potential to distract educational leaders from this project. Nevertheless, I also came to understand that in accordance with the philosophical hermeneutic tradition as described by Gadamer (1960/1989) in his book *Truth and Method,* these potential "distracters" actually serve as a thou, the hermeneutic Other. Through communication and dialogue, of which conflict resolution is one form, the educational community struggles to ground pedagogical responsiveness in an ethical relationship to children.

This study has helped me to see my way through moments of conflict and to pull myself back, to reflect and to try to understand. I can not say that I have become better at helping to solve conflict situations as a consequence of this study, but I can say that I am becoming more aware of where I am within the conflicts and the roles I play as an educational leader. The struggle to remain pedagogical remains an ontological ordeal in becoming, and I continue to try to remain attentive with a listening ear.

Although this study is an hermeneutic study that indicates my own positioning, it is relevant for educational leaders. Leadership is confronted by a confluence of contradictory demands by nature of its dual role. The superintendent, for instance, serves simultaneously as an administrator concerned with matters of expediency, orderliness, control, and effectiveness, and as an educational leader concerned about children, their learning needs, and their wellbeing. This dissertation throws light on that dual role, the struggles, but also the possibilities that emerge from such an arrangement. This study concluded with an understanding that this dual role and its contradictory pulls serve to nurture the practical wisdom necessary to mediate between the pedagogical traditions in which one finds oneself, the communal sense of pedagogical intent, and the child's presenting call for relevance.

The ethic of professional responsibility-taking that fore-structured this study, privileged the voices of marginalized children, but it may have resulted in a violent disregard for teachers and leaders who find themselves imbedded in a social arrangement that favors personal freedom and individuality over communal action, and competition over shared responsibility. When this study began, a personal ethic was stated that declared that teaching is not difficult. I have come to see that there is a lack of regard in that ethic for the social complexities that affect the teaching and learning landscapes in which teachers find themselves. As this research drew to a close, I have come to regret that statement. I have come to recognize the task of teaching as an ontological ordeal in becoming pedagogical over children's lives. This is not a task that we can excuse away by the social context, but it ought to be understood as pilgrimage and not judged as being easy or difficult.

Acknowledgements

This dissertation research reflects the shared understandings that have been developed through conversation with so many helpful mentors. I am especially grateful for the caring, knowledgeable guidance and support that, as my supervisor, Dr. Terrance Carson provided. I remain indebted to his time commitment and to the encouragement he provided when I became discouraged through this sometime difficult journey, but also for the many thoughtful insights he provided through questioning and mentoring.

I also acknowledge the special guidance that I received from Dr. David Blades who guided me through the initial stages and with whom I began this study with the other members of my cohort whom I here acknowledge as well for their insights and encouragement along this journey. Dr. David Geoffrey Smith is also acknowledged for the tremendous insights he has provided through is teachings, writings, and the personal guidance he has offered me as my instructor and as a member of my committee. I remain humbled by his ability to articulate what is meaningful, relevant, and significant about living life mindfully. I also thank Dr. Ingrid Johnston for her thoughtful guidance and support as a member of my committee. Also, I wish to acknowledge the remaining members of my oral examining committee, Drs. George Buck, Rosemary Foster, and Eugenie Samier, my external examiner, for their time and insights.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the support of Drs. Karen Nelson, Nola Aitken, and Art Aitken, colleagues and friends, who willingly gave of their time to help structure my thoughts, edit my work, model pedagogical action, and contribute to the insights expressed in this study.

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Chapter I

Introducing the Struggle in Educational Leadership

Beliefs, Assumptions, and Experiences: Forestructurings of my Leadership

Hans-Georg Gadamer, the father of philosophical hermeneutics, discusses how our actions, decisions, and options are forestructured by beliefs, assumptions, and experiences. Smith (2002) suggests that the degree to which I become familiar with this ethic through a process of concealment and unconcealment may be the degree to which I recognize and grapple with the limit situations of my leadership practice. Hermeneutics is this process of coming to understand, becoming familiar with unfamiliarity, of beginnings somewhere in the middle of things: Of the parts that inform the whole as they stand in dialogue with the whole that in turn informs the parts in a never ending spiral of changing horizons.

Gadamer (1960/1989) in *Truth and Method*, develops a philosophical hermeneutic understanding that the surfacing of forestructures or the rehabilitation of prejudice assists us in knowing ever more deeply why we behave the way we do. He notes that "it is the tyranny of hidden prejudices that makes us deaf to what speaks to us in tradition" (p. 270). He defines prejudice as "a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have been finally examined" (p. 270), and he further clarifies that "the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being" (pp. 276-277). What sets hermeneutic inquiry apart from other forms of inquiry is its rescuing of prejudice as an opening up of one's placement in the histories of the traditions in which one finds oneself and also one's placement within one's own personal life history. Prejudice serves as a fertile ground for inquiry, not to remove all prejudice—an enlightenment preoccupation with reason that Gadamer claims is misguided—but rather too leave prejudice itself open to inquiry, revision, and abandonment.

In keeping with Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, the following attempt to understand the ethic that grounds my work as a superintendent of a school district is undertaken here not to discover an ethic once and for all, but to rescue that ethic from its hidden location and to lay it bare so that it too can ground this inquiry, and, itself, remain open to revision and abandonment. The following ethic is what I believe has informed my leadership practice and has called this study forth. In fairness, though, since the writing is always a process of entering both before and after the study, the very process of being called forth by this study, too, has reinvented this ethic.

For whatever reasons and experiences, the ethic that I believe structures my actions as an educational leader includes a commitment to pedagogy as a responsibility towards children and their potentialities. Understanding pedagogical intent from such nonspecific terms allows for ease of discussion and agreement. Most educators would believe that their work oriented towards engaging with children such that learning becomes more possible and that success is realized for students through each encounter with their teachers. There would be some agreement that in responding pedagogically, educators ensure that each encounter with a child nurtures that child's successful engagement with the learning tasks, the social environment of the school, and the intellectual, emotional, and psychological interests, demands, and desires engaging the child at any given time. However, it becomes quite difficult to agree upon a definition of pedagogical action more specifically when, for instance, "a curriculum" that a teacher is charged with "getting through" is of neither relevance nor interest to the child, and when the child rejects the teacher's efforts. Then pedagogical action might be understood as motivating the child; convincing the child through persuasive argument, manipulation or charismatic appeal; downright expecting and demanding that the child take part; or punishing and excluding the child "for his/her own good". From a more progressive curriculum tradition, pedagogical action might mean discovering the child's interests and challenges and working through his/her interests to meet some curricular aims, add new ones, delay others, and even eliminate some from the child's current learning environment. Pedagogical intent could also come to mean placing the learning outcomes and the child in an interrelationship of inquiry such that relevance is realized through give and take. A strong, unreflective orientation towards one or other of the above approaches might preclude others such that the same approach is applied to all children, each year, and the approach itself becomes legitimated as pedagogical action irrespective of its impact on children.

The definition of pedagogical intent that interests me as a school district superintendent and researcher is the nonspecific definition of being oriented thoughtfully towards children and their wellbeing such that children's interests and learning needs are addressed through a caring, inclusive learning environment that places children and their teachers on a mutual journey towards self discovery, meaningfulness, and relevance. Even during moments of significant conflict, teachers and students can engage pedagogically as learners, each willing to risk him/herself in order to preserve the pedagogical relationship. The capacity to risk and to compromise oneself for the other, as one might understand the self to be at any given time, is at the heart of pedagogical action as defined by me at this time. Pedagogical intent is about caring for the other through an attentive ear so that the other can gain the confidence and goodwill to care for self and other through reciprocal action and thoughtfulness.

Inherent in pedagogical intent is an aspect of caring. Recently this issue of the role that caring plays in student/teacher rapport has been raised for discussion across British Columbia through a provincial survey that among many other factors questions students from grades 4, 7, 10, and 12 about how well their teachers care about them. Alberta schools have been engaged in similar surveying of students. The 2003 British Columbia provincial average scores on this survey for the question, "My teachers care about me?" are 90%, 72%, 38%, and 44%, respectively for the above named grades surveyed for the combined choices many times and all of the times. In dealing with these results as an educational leader, I have witnessed how teachers and principals become very defensive about the statistical validity of the results. Indeed, they concern themselves over the question of who answered the surveys, rationalizing that possibly only the "complainers" responded or "maybe the kids don't understand what caring means". In engaging principals and teachers in a discussion about how we might come to understand what these results mean to us as educators as a forum for reflecting upon how we demonstrate or fail to demonstrate caring in our classrooms on a daily basis, seldom have I heard that possibly we should simply sit with students and find out what caring looks and feels like for them. Seldom have I heard that maybe we should reconsider how we behave in the classroom as adults and as teachers such that we have failed to demonstrate caring in ways that children from grades 7, 10, and 12 would recognize it as such. As the discussion progresses, there is beginning to be evidence of this pedagogical work of opening ourselves up to student critique by discussing these questions with students; however, this pedagogical way of responding to a student survey is not well many teachers and principals. The reasons articulated for holding discussions with students and parents is more often about "fixing" children's ideas about what caring means rather than about discovering what children are telling us its absence feels like and what its presence might look like from a child's point of view. It is my experience that by and large, this whole question about caring is seen as unnecessary and irrelevant work. Resistance to this work of understanding the impact we have on children's lives and the way they view us as their educators seems quite un-pedagogic to me as a district superintendent interested in the question of how one remains faithful to pedagogical intent in one's dealings with teachers, students, parents and principals during attempts at conflict resolution; yet, I believe that the British Columbia and Alberta experiences around these survey results may actually demonstrate a profound resistance to understanding pedagogical intent as a reciprocal and thoughtful orientation towards children and their wellbeings.

The Alberta province's Department of Education states a pedagogical ethic in its *Teaching Quality Standard* document that reads, "Quality teaching occurs when the teacher's ongoing analysis of the context, and the teacher's decisions about which pedagogical knowledge and abilities to apply result in optimum learning by students" (p. 1). This standard reflects the same ethic that Haberman (1995) discovered in his study of approximately 120 interviews with what he called "star teachers", their students, parents, and administrators. Haberman found that quality teaching occurs when teachers take personal responsibility for developing successful interpersonal relations with students, for motivating students, rewarding students for their efforts, presenting relevant, engaging learning experiences for students, and for accepting student failure as their own professional failure. Haberman talked about how successful teachers do motivate students, and how they do make a difference so that students under their care and nurturance tend to succeed, even under difficult circumstances. Conversely, he discussed how weak teachers fail significantly in their pedagogical commitments to guard over children, their nurturance needs, and their potentialities mainly because these teachers refuse to take personal responsibility for student success and failure; rather, they tend to be outward focused in their search for excuses. Failure is either conceived as a consequence of an "irrelevant curriculum", a perceived lack of support from administration or from parents or as a lack of commitment from students (pp. 3-20).

I remember being a student of many years ago, long before I fell in love with learning for its own sake, long before schooling captured my interest, and long ago when my life held its own distracting disturbances and demands such that for a variety of reasons very few teachers actually reached me. I spent a large part of my schooling daydreaming, doing my own thing or engaging in some distraction or other with fellow students, but seldom being focused on the work at hand.

But I also recall those few teachers who really grabbed my attention. I recall my grade nine science teacher who came well prepared with demonstrations and practical experiments, and who showed absolute excitement about the concepts she was teaching as though she was opening up the natural world for the first time. I also recall my high school chemistry, physics and biology teacher who taught through active engagement, and who connected our learning to real life advantages and challenges: The teacher who shared an enthusiasm for his subjects but more importantly for his students, and for their own journey to master the subject at hand. I recall my high school English teacher who grabbed my attention because he focused on readings that held poignancy and relevance for my fellow students and me, and he helped us discover that life was filled with meanings and intentionalities.

I have seen quality teaching and teachers, I have seen very unsuccessful teachers, and I have seen a range in between. My ethic includes expecting quality teaching from all teachers for all students. Quality teachers and leaders know that the only people they can really change are themselves. By focusing on self-improvement as a teacher or an educational leader we can have positive influences over children's lives. The opposite is also true, as teaching is never neutral.

This is the ethic that I think informs my work. I also know that I have met with frustrations, have felt failure in actualizing this ethic, and that I have made compromises because there is also the need that I feel for being politically astute in order to survive as an educational leader. There is a need to appease and meet the expectations of principals, teachers, parents, students, and the board of school trustees. In today's flattened hierarchical educational organizations this need to appease can heavily influence the decisions one makes during moments of parent, student, school conflict depending upon the role that the particular participants have in the learning community. I am not going to pretend that everyone is treated the same. For instance, a principal or a teacher who is highly regarded by the community or the board of school trustees has a certain influence over decisions that a less regarded principal might not have. Affluence within this community has the potential to influence the decisions that one makes regarding student misbehavior. The child of a prominent parent advisory member can exert a different pressure on the school's response to student misbehavior than does a child of a parent who is considered a "wing nut". This is not a term that I have coined. This is a term that I have heard used to describe parents who "complain frequently" or whose children "cause various problems". Validating a "wing nut's" resonant cord in a particular case can be a very difficult task as an educational leader. A parent who is also a prominent businessperson in a small community holds a certain sway over school decision-making, as does a parent who is also an educator; but the parent who is considered a "wing nut", holds little sway and is marginalized.

How far can a superintendent go towards remaining committed to pedagogical intent, for instance, when there is a current outcry in public and media opinion for zero tolerance? This phrase is often understood as suspension and expulsion for matters of violence, to which childhood fighting or acting out even at the elementary level is equated by the superficiality that pervades the teaching and learning landscape—that domain of highly legitimated "practical" knowing that sees itself as being superior to "theory" and "idealism". How faithful to pedagogical intent can a superintendent or principal remain, for instance, when teachers, and parents are calling for expedient, quick fixes to normal childhood conflict or to adult/child confrontation that occurs when a variety of people live and work together over extended periods of time? How pedagogically centered can an educational leader remain when those he/she is charged to lead remain stubbornly committed to views of teaching and learning that ignore the current social structures in which children are raised and socialized, and who remain committed to a view that the original difficulties that arise out of a heterogeneous society should not be their problem?

And yet, our hopes and dreams for students is most often articulated through the public educational system. It is this strong faith in public education as a main source of social access in children's lives that alone is sufficient for committing one's practice to safeguarding each child's opportunity for a quality education. There are still too many children for whom public education has not and does not work: The expelled student, the one who is failed, and the one who finally drops out; the one who ends up in continuous conflict or the one who just goes through school without ever being engaged in learning and without actually graduating. It is these students for whom this study has been undertaken.

The ethic that I believe informs my work also includes an understanding that, indeed, there may be parents who as in their teacher's opinions do not parent their children so that they enroll "school- ready"—a term that subtly means, "This child is not really my responsibility." There may be countless children who come to school undisciplined, undernourished, unkempt, illiterate, and in sundry other unprepared ways that principals and teachers will quote when they try to justify using failure, suspension or even expulsion as a means to getting a parent's attention or to forcing a parent to take responsibility, as I have heard it explained by some teachers and principals. Through my observations of conflict situations, I have come to know that when parents and schools part ways and battle unresolved issues, students lose. Pedagogy entreats educators to understand the contexts within which they work as a way of trying to create as much success as possible for each student through an enhanced understanding of those contexts—whether it be the resources they have or don't have, the parenting supports and skills or lack thereof, the student's particular learning strengths or deficits, and most importantly, the teacher's own knowledge, skills and attitudes or lack thereof. Pedagogy does not entitle educators to use the context as an excuse for abdicating their responsibilities over children's growth and development as decent, contributing members of their society. Teaching and working with the difficult-to-reach-student is every bit as much the work of pedagogy as is teaching the ready-to-learn, easy-to-teach students who by and large populate our schools and pose as small challenge to our pedagogical growth and development.

Mine is an ethic of making do with what we have and of not sacrificing children to our protests over political decisions, perceived funding shortages, flawed program designs, poor administrative decisions, and accountability requirements. It is an ethic of working within and through the context that pervades the teaching and learning landscape at whatever time in which we find ourselves. It is about doing the best we can do with what we have and don't have, with what we want and don't want in order to offer hope, possibility, significance, relevance, and pilgrimage to children's lives.

I also firmly believe that teaching is not difficult but is actually rewarding and great for all concerned if as a teacher, you are enthusiastic about your work with children, you are self-reflective about your impact on children and their learning, you like kids, really enjoy them for who they are and who they are becoming, and if you like learning as a shared experience with the children over whom you pursue your life as their teacher. I recall Albert and Ray, two colleagues of mine from my early years as a beginning teacher. They were both nearing retirement having lived in the same little town and having taught in the same school for all of their teaching careers. They spent their days planning exciting new lessons, laughing with students, playing chess during breaks, and working hard because they liked what they did. Students loved them, and students learned from them.

But I also remember Tom, another teacher from this same period: About the same age as Ray and Albert wanting to retire, but not able to afford it, sitting in the staff room venting about kids, using tired lessons, running around yelling at students, trying to catch them for being "rotten". Tom used to say, "My day starts at 3:00 p.m. and ends at 9:00 a.m." He reveled in the saying of it. Students disliked him, toyed with him, were mean to him, and drove Tom to end his career on sick leave, stressed and beaten. I believe that we "reap what we sow", and that the golden rule applies to professionalism, expertise, and to the joys and frustrations of teaching.

By and large, students are highly forgiving of our shortcomings. The hard-to-teach students or the ones who take us to task for our shortcomings need to be viewed as an opportunity to improve our pedagogic responsiveness. They need to be thanked, for they are the ones who offer us an opportunity to engage reflectively as opposed to reflexively regarding our pedagogical commitments towards them. They represent the limit situations of our pedagogical practice and they force us to examine pedagogy in its most vulnerable, but also very rewarding state: At its very limits. My ethic is also reasonable enough, I think, to recognize that a fully operational, modernist pedagogy cannot be built around the limit situation: But the questions remain, "How well does it respond?" and "Do we really want a fully operational, modernist pedagogy that reinforces existing social structures and power relations, assumes objectivity, and that loses sight of the personal identities of teachers, students, parents, and educational leaders?"

The acknowledgement that many students come to school needing to be parented as well as taught is not to say that parents should not be expected to do their part in raising their children or that children do not need to learn their own lessons in what it takes to be successful, cooperative, contributing students. It is simply a recognition that teaching and parenting are not bifurcated functions, but that teaching and parenting have overlapping functions, and that just because one party "lets a student down" or "isn't doing its part", this neglect by others is not a license for the school to do likewise.

It is my experience that when we remember to be as forgiving towards our students as we are towards our teachers and ourselves as educational leaders, then students succeed. When we put students before power and control, sort and sift, accountability demands, win or lose, and right and wrong, then students succeed, because I have heard it said, and I firmly believe, that love is the best form of discipline. When students know that we truly care for them, and that our decisions are oriented towards their wellbeing and betterment, then students work for us too. When they know that we truly are giving them our best efforts, they too become forgiving of our human shortcomings, cut us our slack, and give us a better effort in return. As with love, modeling this commitment to them and to their wellbeing by living it well is another excellent form of pedagogic action that serves to disciple students well.

Purpose of this Study

The public education system is often understood as each child's passport to his/her future wellbeing, and as such, as an educational leader, it is necessary that I grapple to understand how pedagogy, the pressures of politics, and the demands of interpersonal relations operate within my attempts at conflict resolution regarding children and their education. This ethical grounding that is oriented towards improving conditions and possibilities for all children, coupled with the inherent confusions, tensions, and impediments that occur regularly, and that frustrate my desire to align the outcomes of my leadership efforts with this ethic is the purpose of this study. The ongoing struggles I experience in fulfilling my leadership obligations to children, teachers, and principals with apparent competing needs and demands; and my desire to better interpret and understand these struggles provides the hermeneutic direction that this study has taken. It represents an attempt to surface some relevant questions to which the following narrative study that represents the text of my leadership practice provides possible answers (Gadamer 1967/1989, and Smith, 2002).

This study is an attempt to expose my decision-making tendencies as an educational leader during conflict resolution and to open opportunities for improving my practice. It is an attempt to understand how one remains faithful to an ethic of pedagogical intent during the heightened moments of conflict resolution. This study is an attempt to reveal the role played by the tensionality of Being between my presently espoused ethic and the ethic that becomes apparent through an examination of my actions and decisions during conflict resolution. It is an attempt to engage hermeneutically within the tension between the concealment and the unconcealment of my own ethical beliefs and my leadership practice. An attempt to understand my own inverse cripplings, my own limits and constraints that I bring to this important business of educational leadership, because I believe that we can really only change ourselves, and that the real work of pedagogy is on self as we stand in relationship with the roles we assume, and with others.

Chapter II

The Research Approach

A Critique of Method

The scientific studies that arise out of much enlightenment rationalism are grounded in a faith in method. Inquiry is quite often structured by an assumed objectivity that bifurcates a knowing/known-unified subject from a knowable unified object of intended study. The productive scientific successes of method in the natural sciences have created a blinding adherence to instrumental, technical approaches, and to intentionality and directionality not only in the natural sciences from which method originates, but they have served as a sort of inverse crippling, and unwavering faith, that caused a belief in the superiority of methodological inquiry irrespective of the initiating call for inquiry. Namely, there has been a desire for the application of scientific methods in the human sciences irrespective of their location in human history, and in philosophical, social, and psychological memory. Whereas the natural sciences deal in what are called "facts" that are supposedly discovered by "discerning, rational intellects", the human sciences delve into the inter-subjective lives of individuals and groups, and into complex human processes. What is considered productive in the natural sciences—method—becomes restrictive in the human sciences. A stubborn adherence to method in the human sciences requires a bifurcation of self from self and from other such that the falsely-unified self becomes alienated from the human, social, philosophical, and psychological inter-subjectivities that give self meaning, relevance, and significance (Gadamer 1960/1989, pp. 346-349).

Whereas, inquiry in the natural sciences is directed by a way of doing things to things to discover the unified wholeness of the objects under study, there is an academic recognition that inquiry in the human sciences that concerns itself with a search for meanings, relevance, and significance in human experiences assumes the characteristic of "a mode of knowing and a mode of being" (Gadamer 1960/1989, p. 16). Research in the human sciences is a continuous process of developing "talents and capacities" (p. xii) for understanding human experiences. Human inquiry finds its location in language and in experience, and as such, it is already infused with points of view and biases that help to ground and structure such inquiry. Whereas, through method, the natural sciences disavow such grounding, and they require an alienation of the self from the self, the human sciences have come to recognize the necessity of engaging the historical, social, psychological, and philosophical contexts as fertile discourses of discovery and of insight. Gadamer talks about the revealing nature of insight in human inquiry as being "more than the knowledge of this or that situation. It always involves an escape from something that had deceived us and held us captive…Insight is something we come to. It too is ultimately part of the vocation of man—i.e., to be discerning and insightful" (p. 356).

Research Linkages

Since this inquiry arises from a desire to better understand the reoccurring rupturings within my experiences as an educational leader involved in attempts at conflict resolution between students, teachers, principals, and parents, the research approaches selected are intended to support self-reflection about personal experience in order to discover possibilities for how things may be otherwise. This research is grounded by the traditions of hermeneutic inquiry that seek to understand lived experience in ever expanding horizons of interpretation and insightfulness. In conversing hermeneutically with autobiographical composite narratives, and with the texts, readings, and discussions that have informed this study, it is hoped that better understandings will emerge that will be relevant to my practice as an educational leader. What I am searching for is insight on engaging as an educational leader in conflict resolution regarding matters of deep pedagogical significance. It is my hope that by re-examining the situations in which I have been involved, I will be able to apply a hermeneutic of interpretation that calls forth new meanings. I hope that by going through this inquiry my leadership practice will be infused in new and relevant ways with insights on pedagogical intent, and that my own ability to remain faithful to such intent during conflict resolution is enhanced.

This re-examination of lived experience will utilize composite narratives that have been written from my point of view as an educational leader. The composites will be based upon past experiences and will be written to reflect the essences of those experiences: The thoughts, feelings, loyalties, actions, and defenses that I as an educational leader have come to witness and recognize as patterns of responses in like situations that get repeated during moments of conflict resolution involving students, teachers, parents, principals and me as their educational leader charged with the weighty responsibility to assist in resolving such conflict pedagogically. Being structured by a particular point of view and by personal desires that are themselves inter-subjective and open, these narratives will, of course, fall short in their attempts at loyalty to the "facts" of the remembered events that these composites are intended to represent. They will instead reflect an ethic and an interpretive, a factual fiction—otherwise referred to as an authorship—that structures their writing, that pre-determines the interactions of the characters involved, that imbues them with relevance and significance, and that serves as fertile grounds for self-rupturing, self-reflection, and responsibility taking.

Phenomenological writing techniques encourage a loyalty to the deep essences that structure human experiences. In his work on this research approach, van Manen (1997) suggests that with phenomenological writing, "we are less concerned with the factual accuracy of an account than with the plausibility of an account—whether it is true to our living sense of it" (p. 65). It must be understood that there is no attempt in this writing to disavow the personal biases that structure the autobiographical narratives. As an educational leader with an ethic of professional responsibility-taking as stated in the previous chapter, and in being motivated to remain faithful to pedagogical intent, defined as an orientation towards the wellbeing of children in any given situation such that even conflict represents an opportunity for children to capably participate in the educational cultures to which they belong, I am the author of these narratives. As such, they may be structured by what I believe my ethical orientation to be as stated earlier, but also by what I fail to identify as structuring discourses that make the narratives possible in their written form. My frustrations as an educational leader with fellow educators whom I often view as being resistant to self-reflection, and my desire to do well in my role as a young educational leader with a need to satiate the political demands and the staff relational requirements that successful educational leaders must have, but also as understood by the communities I have served, may also be the fertile grounds for personal biases that structure these remembered composite events. The voices of fellow educators, that during conflict resolution may have come to be "re-authored" in the following narratives and in my work as significations of resistances to personal reflection, may have been silenced through the writings that follow: A violent rejection of their felt struggles "as educators in real classrooms filled with real children who present with inconsolable and irreconcilable needs and/or desires" might also have unwittingly participated in the writing of these narratives. My deep commitment to understanding student resistances as learning opportunities for educators, may also serve to privilege the voices of students over their teachers in the writing of these narratives.

Instead of attempting to disavow them, my personal biases and ethic as an educational leader will be understood as discourses that emerge thematically, that require discovery, and that enable self-rupturing and growth. As per Gadamer's (1960/1989) philosophical hermeneutic tradition, these biases will be understood as the fertile ground from which this study finds its purpose and its hopefulness. The composite narratives will be understood as writings that privilege a particular point of view that is itself structured by indeterminate discourses that aide in discovering meanings regarding pedagogical intent. Conceptually, at least, there is a recognition articulated here that in privileging a particular point of view, other voices are silenced and require attentive listening that I as a researcher engaged in self-discovery must facilitate.

It is understood in this study that the biases and points of view that make possible the writing of these narratives were present in the remembered experiences that ground these composites. It is also recognized that through the course of this research, previous points of view and biases may have been affected in indeterminate ways, and that these subtle shifts may themselves have influenced the writing of these composites through the rupturing that the research question regarding pedagogical intent imposes on me as the autobiographical, narrative inquirer.

As such, as with all phenomenological writing, the autobiographical composites will serve as plausible reflections of human experience that contain other reoccurring discourses waiting to be discovered by the attentive ear of the researcher. This study is a phenomenological hermeneutic study of pedagogical intent. The autobiographical narratives that follow are a descriptive study of lived experiences involving conflict situations that pedagogical intent calls to inquiry. The analysis of and reflections on the autobiographical narratives and their said and unsaid discourses that imbue the composites with significance are hermeneutic in that they are an "interpretive study of the expressions and objectifications (texts) of lived experience in the attempt to determine the meaning embodied in them" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 38). In order to engage in phenomenological inquiry, van Manen suggests that the researcher

> must recall the experience in such a way that the essential aspects, the meaning structures of this experience as lived through, are brought back, as it were, and in such a way that we recognize this description as *a possible experience*, which means *as a possible interpretation* of that experience. This then is the

> task of phenomenological research and writing: to construct a possible interpretation of the nature of a certain human experience. (p. 41)

The autobiographical composite narratives that follow represent an attempt to engage in phenomenological research. These narratives are situated in this dissertation as the fertile grounds for hermeneutic discovery and interpretation by remaining attentive to the various threads of the hermeneutic discourses that Gallagher (1992) delineated into four approaches—conservative, critical, radical, and moderate. It is hoped that by engaging in this dissertation research, as a superintendent, I will become more sensitive to the silent voices inherent in conflict, and that I will be able to engage with a more discerning ear during future attempts at conflict resolution requiring pedagogical responsiveness. It is my hope that I will be better able to recognize the conversational nature of conflict resolution through an attentiveness regarding both the apparent and the silent voices and discourses that permeate the surplus of interests that exist during conflict situations.

It must be cautioned, however, that the hearing of silent voices may not necessarily answer my complaint regarding the call for pedagogical intent. Just because a newly discovered belief, assumption or taken-for-granted paradigm appears to structure our actions, I am in no way suggesting that there is necessarily a correlation or that the correct correlation will miraculously be divined. The importance of ongoing dialogue and study regarding "silent" discourses, though, opens possibilities for becoming personally and professionally more attuned to why I make the decisions I make during attempts at conflict resolution. What is hoped for is that dialogue opens to possibility "professional", "expert" discourses and decisions that come to be understood as interpretives open to critique, revision, and abandonment.

The following questions are posed as a point of entry into the inquiry. Does being attuned to what is not being said by listening with a discerning ear help to build shared understandings and opportunities during moments of conflict? How does one recharge the pedagogies of certainty with the pedagogies of uncertainty and place them back into play so that during conflict resolution we can focus on relevance, meaning, and significance? Does an unearthing of the confluent discourses that enframe pedagogical practice provide greater opportunity for locating pedagogical intent during conflict resolution? Does a deep understanding of hermeneutic principles and practices assist an educational leader in being educationally appropriate, and in exercising leadership during conflict situations among teachers, students, principals, and parents? Although these questions are not necessarily answerable within the parameters of this or any study, they provide me with some direction for engaging hermeneutically with the narratives that follow. It is my hope that they open possibilities for discussion, dialogue, and further study rather than focusing on fault finding about what happened or did not happen.

Narrative as a Form of Hermeneutic Inquiry

The criteria for selecting the narratives that ground this study will be that each narrative represents a related set of significant moments in my leadership practice in which I found myself attempting to resolve conflict between teachers, students, principals, and parents. In searching for significant narratives, I will select those incidents that left me feeling dissatisfied with my ability to remain true to my own tactful understanding of pedagogical intent. I also will select those which when remaining true to my own tactful understanding of pedagogical intent caused significant stress to other participants by the way in which those incidents were resolved. Tact is understood here as it relates to practical wisdom or phronesis: Being able to knowingly apply practical interpretations of presenting situations to a reasonably grounded theoretical, self-knowledge base (Gallagher, 1992). A tactful knowledge of pedagogical intent orients holistically to the wellbeing of the child as called for by the moment, and as legitimated by general acceptance (van Manen, 1991). The problem that these definitions of tact and phronesis present is that the theories and practices that fore-structure lived-experiences are never univocal but remain populated by a surplus of meanings. Nonetheless, there exists a zone of acceptability from which these practices receive their legitimacy.[1]

In using narrative, this study will attempt to remain faithful to phenomenological impulses by being "attentive to how things appear" and by attempting to "let things speak for themselves" (van Manen 1991, p. 180). I will search for those narrative moments that might allow me to see my limits in an attempt to "transcend the limits of [my] interpretive sensibilities" (p. 76). In researching these composites, I will be searching for the nature of pedagogical intent both as it exists, and fails to exist within these narratives and subsequently, within my practice. In his book, *Writing in the Dark*, van Manen (2002) describes phenomenology as a study in which "meanings resonate and reverberate with reflective being" (p. 7). Although he reminds his reader that in phenomenological inquiry the meanings are never complete, he does express the experience of phenomenological writing as a reflexive act in which one may "experience a strange sensation of being gazed at in return by something beyond oneself" (p. 6). In using narrative as a means to inquiry, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have influenced the selection of stories told. They note that in narrative inquiry, "we tell remembered stories of ourselves from earlier times as well as more current stories. All of these stories offer possible plotlines for our futures"(p. 60). Nonetheless, these authors also caution that there are limitations to autobiographical writing that will serve to limit the validity and reliability of the narratives since they are stories structured from memory. These stories must be held with some suspicion since "memory is selective, shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experiences" (p. 142). Furthermore, narratives structured from personal remembrances are presentations of the self as that self stands presently in relationship to remembered events. Each composite narrative must be understood as a possible deconstruction of the self rather than as an accurate representation of the objective events they stand to represent. As van Manen (1997) cautions:

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[1] Gadamer (1989) talks about this zone of acceptability as historically effected consciousness. He discusses the way in which historically effected consciousness infuses hermeneutic activity. As such, tact becomes an experience of one's self. Insight involves "an escape from something that had deceived us and held us captive…an element of self-knowledge and constitutes a necessary side of what we called experience in the proper sense." (p. 356)

> The problem of phenomenological inquiry is not always that we know too little about the phenomenon we wish to investigate, but that we know too much… the problem is that our "common sense" pre-understandings…predispose us to interpret the nature of the phenomenon before we have even come to grips with the significance of the phenomenological question. (p. 46)

And herein lies a significant methodological concern when utilizing autobiographical narrative as a research approach. Contrary to Clandinin and Connelly's notion that narrative inquiry utilizes plotlines, van Manen cautions that narrative can actually be more about the author's subjectivities than it is about remembered events per se.

Bleakley (2000) raises a related concern in his critique regarding narrative study. In his essay entitled, *Writing with Invisible Ink*, Bleakley reviews the literature on narrative writing demonstrating that reflection on practice through narrative writing has "shifted to a critical and personal 'reflexivity' where both the form of writing and the status of the author are interrogated and problematized", but he goes on to caution that far from simply reflecting current practices, narratives also produce "knowledge and identities" (p. 11). He also notes that in writing as reflective practice the genre adds its own inflection to practice identities and various privileged discourses (p. 12). Bleakley claims that much of the writing today in educational studies has undergone a slippage from "professional practice to confessional practice" (p. 15) noting that:

> The very form of confessional writing we employ to apparently free ourselves from subjection to a lack of reflection comes to produce the objects of its inquiry as confessing subjects, thus formulating a new layer of unreflexiveness and subjection. Such writing is then not liberating or empowering, but rather offers a paradoxical discipline, as a technology of the self in which, as a practice of liberation, there are certain things that may be said and those that may not be said. (p. 14)

Bleakley's concern is that in unreflectively standing as an authority over the surfacing of personal subjectivities, narrative writing actually constructs identities, including political interests, rather than merely revealing them (pp. 16-17). He further states that although the postmodern identity is understood to have been liberated from modernist imperatives of rationalism, constancy, and homogeneity, personal-confessional writing risks presenting an after-the-fact self that is "authentic", "teleological", and "knowledgeable". In being the author of the autobiographical composites that follow, it is possible that I might fail to become reflective, limited by my familiarity with the language such that the language used remains taken-for-granted and unexamined. In order to engage in the question of pedagogical intent hermeneutically, there is a necessity of dialogue with the language that structures the narratives such that narratives become portals to self-reflection and further understanding. There is a need to recognize the personal and professional ethics, preferences, and beliefs that structure the narratives as well as the traditions that give rise to the presenting language.

Bleakley restores the status of autobiographical writing not as a personal confessional writing but as a device for revealing ethical principles that bind the self to the other such that autobiographical writing is "actually for the eye and the ear of the other and not the author" and serves as "a means by which relation to an other is articulated" (p.21). Autobiographical narrative, to be meaningful, must be "ethically sensitive" and carry "aesthetic depth". For instance, in this study, narrative writing will be utilized in an attempt to tentatively rescue some sense of the informed understandings that forestructure pedagogical practice in educational leadership: Tentatively, because to borrow from Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, and to not be too severe about autobiographical narrative as a form of confessional writing, there is an optimism that exists in interpretation when interpretation is recognized for its creative, not merely reproductive, capacity as it captures an aesthetic experience. Nonetheless, in order to achieve this sense of the narrative as a medium of revealing ethics and principles that structure relationships, Josselson (1995) in her article entitled *Imagining the Real: Empathy, Narrative, and the Dialogic Self*, reveals that narrative inquiry requires a suspicion of self such that the real work in narrative study is to find "where the self is most clearly in dialogue with self" (p. 37). This suspicion of self requires an examination of the discourses that infuse both the history of the self and of the context that gives rise to the narratives themselves.

An Hermeneutic Examination of Self Through Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry requires a suspicion of self that attempts to surface the assumptions and suppositions that help to generate the narrative in its present form "not in order to forget [these assumptions] again, but rather to hold them deliberately at bay and even to turn this knowledge against itself, as it were, thereby exposing its shallow or concealing character" (van Manen 1997, p. 47). Ricoeur (1990/1992) notes that "there is no ethically neutral narrative" (p. 115). What personal ethic or taken-for-granted schemas color the narrative, and are revealed by it? What uninterrupted continuities of self are concealed and/or revealed by the narrative (Ricoeur, p. 117)? As such, an analysis of each narrative will include an attempt to reflect on the notions of power, truth, and knowledge enframing my own involvement within the remembered events as narrated (Blades 1991, p. 33).

Nonetheless, in their discussion on the narrative approach, Tappan and Brown (1989) focus on "how individuals give meaning to their life experiences by representing them in narrative form" (p. 183). Like Gadamer, these researchers propose that the unavoidable personal prejudices that structure narrative serve as fertile grounds for better understanding self and others. They note that, "narrative, therefore, attempts to endow a sequence of events with the kind of legitimacy and meaning that would justify and sustain the moral perspective on behalf of which it is written" (p. 188). Narrative is never free of moral inspiration, but rather it is both structured by and structures such ethic.

Ethical Considerations in Narrative Inquiry

In light of the above discussion, the ethical considerations in this hermeneutic study eliminated the need to protect privacy by utilizing composites of a variety of experiences that I clumped into three main plotlines or related topics: Assault and/or abuse of authority as represented by the Jolene narrative; misbehaviour and questionable assessment practices which I combined in the narrative on Robert; and program placement conflicts as represented by the narrative about Billy. These narratives arose out of many related incidents that varied more by degree, place, and time than they did in significance or meaning. Conflict in schools is experienced around these reoccurring concerns that in no way claim to reflect the total range of conflicts that arise. There are other issues such as bullying, student violence, and the use of questionable resources, for instance. The selected narratives will represent those areas of school conflict where I have experienced difficulty in remaining pedagogically centered as an educational leader as previously described. The many such instances of conflict that I have experienced as an educator have informed this call to inquiry. By using composite narratives that from a factual perspective are fictions, there was a need to be as faithful as possible to the essences of meaning, relevance, and significance as lived in the originating life-experiences that informed each composite. In using composites around plotlines, there was an assumption that uniquely situated conflicts about related issues hold common, relevant tensions, subjectivities, and aesthetic principles that can be adequately captured in a composite narrative. There was also an assumption that a composite narrative can adequately reflect the range of intensities, actions, thoughts and feelings that exist in a variety of related conflict situations, and that some understanding of the struggle to remain pedagogically-centered can be articulated.

To not artificially predetermine these composites' hermeneutic value when constructing them is an ethical requirement that calls for due deference to recognized, phenomenological narrating practices. Positioning narrating and narrative analysis as a legitimate inquiry will require this faithfulness (as understood in its imperfect hermeneutic state) to the originating experiences that informed the composite narratives, since, as inquiry, narrative and analysis offer themselves as possibilities for critical self-reflection for both the inquirer and the reader. Inquiry is positioned as possibility for critical professional reflection, empowerment, disturbance, liberation, and change; as such, I desire that the voice that is being given to lived-experience through narration remains authentic within a circular understanding of that term. In other words, narrative inquiry retains its ethical integrity by being faithful to both the originating experiences, and to the ethical prejudices of its authorship. According to Tappan and Brown (1989):

> The attainment of authorship as expressed in the [narratives] an individual tells, indicates, therefore, that [he/]she has claimed authority for the moral thoughts, feelings, and actions that constitute the psychological dimensions of [his/]her moral experience (p. 190).

In remaining committed to understanding the circular relationship that exists between the ethical structurings and combined originating life-experiences of the composite narratives under study, my hope is that narrative analysis will assist me in taking responsibility for my thoughts, feelings, and actions with respect to my ability or failure to respond pedagogically during conflict resolution. Tappan and Brown add that what is needed is "a hermeneutic methodology sensitive to the subtle nuance of voice, language and perspective and open to the possibility that the same text can be read in a number of different ways" (p. 196).

Hermeneutic Inquiry: A Genealogical Review

Although narrative has been used to structure this study, it will remain a vehicle by which to engage in an interpretation regarding pedagogical intent. Engagement with the multi-vocal processes of appropriation, explication, and transcendence in order to arrive at an understanding of human experience is generally accepted as a hermeneutic act variously located within hermeneutic traditions; as such, this is a hermeneutic study. Hermeneutics attempts to reveal understanding through interpretation. Modern hermeneutics as practiced in the social sciences originates from the theological practice of appropriating meaning from scripture and then applying that meaning to modern life. In the process, both scripture and modern life become simultaneously reproduced and transformed. It borrows practices from the field of law that appropriates tradition in order to discover justice within the current situation before the courts, once again both reproducing and transforming; it is informed by philological studies that attempt to explicate the relations of power, and the epistemologies inherent in language; it borrows from the philosophical attempt to extract meaning and significance from being itself; and, it derives its own validity from within its own emerging traditions (Gadamer, 1960/1989; Caputo, 1987; Caputo, 2000; Palmer, 1969 & Gallagher, 1992).

There remains, continuing, rich discussions and debates about hermeneutics as a method, a philosophy or a way of being. Palmer (1969) speaks about it as an experience: "A breaking down and breaking open of one's old way of seeing…[such that] he (sic) is so changed he (sic) can never regain the innocence lost through experience" (p. 249). Palmer discusses truth as it emerges in hermeneutic understanding, not as a correspondence to an objective being, but rather as an ambiguous, tentative unconcealment. He defines unconcealment as "the simultaneous covering up of truth in its inexhaustible fullness" (p. 245). Caputo (2000) talks about the surplus of meanings inherent within lived-experience and defines this surplus as ambiguity or original difficulty. It is this original difficulty that calls one to hermeneutic inquiry, described by Caputo as the necessity of interpretation (p. 3). Smith (2002) talks about the way in which hermeneutic inquiry is a search for meanings, "of trying to understand ever more profoundly what makes life life, what makes living living…[of] asking for the conditions in which it is possible for us to say that we are alive" (p. 184). In other words, what gives life and living meaning, relevance, and significance such that they retain their generative qualities? Likewise, in this paper I am taking pause to ask, "What makes leadership, leadership with regard to pedagogical intent?" "What are the conditions in which it is possible to say that I am a leader who remains faithful to pedagogical intent during attempts at conflict resolution?" Smith assures me that hermeneutic inquiry may be helpful in "providing guidance about the meaning of appropriate action in the conduct of [leadership]" (p. 185).

More specifically, hermeneutics can be traced as a study of interpretation that began with the Greeks and their interpretation of poetry in order to discern wisdom from the poets who were recognized as "the interpreters of the gods" (p. 1, Gallagher 1992). A reading of Gallagher suggests that throughout much of its history, hermeneutics has been oriented more toward the text as "the object of interpretation than toward the interpretational process itself. The Greeks, however, like the early Christians, utilized oral traditions to read scripture and poetry, and to apply these readings to their own circumstances. An oral performance contained application and immediacy as dialogue ensued between the orator and the audience. Rather than being the object of interpretation, an oral reading was understood as an interpretation of "the objective reality" of the orator and audience (p. 322) with immediate, regional application. Chladenius, referenced the hermeneutic project as "explication leading towards understanding" such that presenting what is understood assumes priority over understanding something since it is by presenting both with and to others as a sort of dialogue involving question and answer that one comes to understand differently (p. 325).

As writing became the norm in practices of theology and law, unlike in conversation where according to Gallagher there is “little or no distinction between a text and its interpretation”, there developed an understanding of the text as a work that embodies objectivity and fact (p. 322). Early modern understandings of hermeneutics have taken the text as the end in itself and positioned interpretation as discovery of fact. Gallagher explains that “for Ast, the aim of hermeneutics was always to move beyond the external accidents like education and background, and thereby to move into the spirit of the author, the meaning of the text” (p. 323). Hermeneutics was a methodology for interpreting the meanings contained within the text understood as an objective whole.

Schleiermacher furthered this methodological hermeneutics by positioning it as an art of understanding, of interpreting. Ricoeur (1973) discusses Schleiermacher’s attempt to develop a general hermeneutics of understanding by subordinating “particular rules of exegesis and philology to the general problematic of understanding” (p. 114). Schleiermacher understood the hermeneutic project as a methodological event that assists one in understanding both the originating contexts of texts, and the authors of texts better than the authors understand them themselves. The understanding of texts is directed backwards towards the author and towards the historical contexts from which the texts emanate as representative self-expressions of objective traditions, languages, and discourses. Schleiermacher excluded from his hermeneutics, though, the “presentation of what has been understood” which others such as Chladenius have recognized as an aspect of understanding even further. For Schleiermacher, hermeneutics included the task of interpreting texts exactly, correctly, and adequately by using rules of interpretation.

Dilthey attempted to expand Schleiermacher's hermeneutic methodology of textual interpretation by developing "a general theory of understanding as a methodology for the social sciences" (p. 325); however, although he attempted to expand the hermeneutic project to a general methodology for studying life, according to Gallagher, Dilthey reduced "life to textual expression" by following too closely his teacher's textual preoccupation. To Dilthey, life could be read as a text. Interpretation became reduced to a correct reading of life in the same way that Schleiermacher reduced interpretation to a correct reading of a text. Nonetheless, Dilthey did expand the hermeneutic project by converting the methodological preoccupation of the natural sciences into a methodological preoccupation of the human sciences in which the science of the spirit was taken to mean explicating the historical relations that enable a specific human knowledge (Ricoeur 1973, p. 117). Dilthey set the stage to transfer the hermeneutic preoccupation with "main works to the historical interconnections that carry them" (Ricoeur 1973, p. 116). According to Ricoeur, Dilthey set the stage for moving the hermeneutic project from one of a concern with methodology and epistemology, from a "mode of 'knowing' in order to become a 'way of being'" (p. 113), an ontological project. His positioning of hermeneutics in a relationship with history set the stage for unfolding text "forward toward its immanent meaning and toward the sort of world which it discovers and opens up" (p. 120).

Gallagher reviews how Heidegger radicalized hermeneutics into an ontological concern in which an existential phenomenological analysis of human existence reflects back the essentially "existential-ontological characteristic of human beings" (p. 4). Heidegger's project involved recognition of the forestructures that enable the human condition in its presenting form in an attempt to explicate the very Being of being otherwise referred to as Dasein—"the place where the question of being arises, the place of manifestation" (Ricoeur 1973, p. 121). According to Heidegger, hermeneutics is the project of surfacing one's present horizon of understanding, one's knowledge and experiences, recognizing these as the productive sources of understanding. Ricoeur notes that "it is in relation to my situation, in the fundamental understanding of my position within being, that understanding in its principle sense is implied" (p. 122). Heidegger positioned this horizon of understanding as both the productive grounds for interpretation, and the limiting factor of human understanding. Ricoeur notes that understanding ontologically is not about "grasping a fact [rather, it is about] the apprehension of a possibility and our utmost potentialities" (p. 122).

Gadamer furthered Heidegger's radical hermeneutic project by releasing the possibilities of understanding from Heidegger's sense of the limiting nature of the horizon of understanding. Although he too accepted that understanding is both enabled, and yet encircled and rooted in historically-effected consciousness[2], Gadamer suggests that limits to understanding can be transcended by the horizons that other cultures, individuals, social groups, and traditions both past and present bring to conversation. In conversation, the unfamiliarity of the other de-centers and makes somewhat observable one's own taken-for-granted values and beliefs. In crediting Gadamer with this profound insight, Ricoeur (1973) notes that "where there is a situation, there is a horizon capable of being narrowed or enlarged" through a fusion of the horizons of "two consciousnesses differently situation" (p. 128). Gadamer does not believe, however, that one can ever completely surface one's historically-effected consciousness as an existential project of understanding, and he deconstructs the subject/object bifurcation that aspects of the enlightenment privileges. Gadamer (1960/1989) states that hermeneutics is about letting "what is alienated by the character of the written word or by the character of being distantiated by cultural or historical distances speak again" (p. 295). Nonetheless, understanding is always bound, incomplete, and in process.

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[2] Historically-effected consciousness as termed by Gadamer is taken here to mean the way in which "history precedes me and my reflection; I belong to history before belonging to myself…we cannot extricate ourselves from historical becoming or place ourselves at a distance from it" (Ricoeur 1973, p. 127).

Gallagher discusses the way in which Gadamer almost escapes textualism by "working out not a textual hermeneutics, but a philosophical hermeneutics. He proposes models other than the text, such as play and conversation" (p. 327). Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is an ontological project that in his words is "woven completely and utterly into the general being of human praxis" (p. 328).

Gallagher (1992) attempts to move the hermeneutic project beyond Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics which he claims to be impoverished still by textualism since Gadamer positions interpretation as a "reading in the interior of the mind, and the object of interpretation is reduced again to text" (p. 328). Gallagher desires to expand the hermeneutic project as an educative process of learning rather than one of reading. This expanded hermeneutic of understanding includes interpretation that is inward directed, explication that is outwardly shared with others as presentation, and application as "a transformative self-understanding that comes through interpretation" (p. 328).

Four Hermeneutic Approaches

The following discussion reflects an attempt to locate hermeneutics as discourses of inquiry and of being that infuse my understandings as an educational leader and researcher in my orientation towards the question of inquiry regarding pedagogical intent. Hermeneutics has impacted my understanding of the research question itself and has enabled the narrative writings and interpretations that follow. Engagement in a study of hermeneutics reveals that the compelling influences of traditions on one's orientation towards children such that an understanding of children's wellbeing is reduced to their ability to orient successfully towards established relations of power, established curricula, and legitimized pedagogical traditions is implicated in conservative hermeneutic approaches. The competing desire for emancipative pedagogies through which certain preferred versions of emancipation often become reified as truth and necessity is influenced by the critical hermeneutic discourse. Either of these discourses in their restrictive forms have the potential to impede one's ability to respond authentically towards children and to their presenting calls for pedagogical action. Through the course of this study, I have come to believe that in being responsive to children, one must be willing to risk one's loyalties to a meta-narrative, to a curriculum tradition, for example, or to one's own sense of what it takes to be educated in today's social world. Even so, one cannot always articulate one's relationship to a meta-narrative or to a personal preference or desire even though such a relationship exists. The following discussion on radical and moderate hermeneutics does provide some grounding for understanding pedagogy as a way of being that emerges from complex inter-subjective relationships. Pedagogical responsiveness can be conceptualized as emerging from dialogical relationships amongst the pedagogical traditions and where one stands relative to these traditions at a given time; the present communal sense about what it is for which pedagogy stands and what pedagogy looks and feels like to the community; and the child's presenting challenges to these former two forestructures. The following overview of the hermeneutic traditions of inquiry has helped to formulate the inquiry questions and reflections, and the narratives that structure this inquiry. It has influenced my ability as author of these narratives to reflect down through the layers of discourses that would be otherwise silenced by the noise and confusion of the surface challenges inherent in the conflict situations that are described in the narratives that follow.

Conservative Hermeneutics.

Gallagher helps focus hermeneutic inquiry by delineating the four approaches mentioned earlier in this study. The conservative hermeneutic approach as developed by Schleiermacher and Dilthey attempts to achieve faithfulness to tradition. It does so by positioning understanding as the accurate appropriation of the meanings inherent within a tradition irrespective of the distanciation that one historical epoch imposes upon another. The aim of interpretation within this approach is to reproduce meaning in its exact form: A conservative hermeneutic attempt to impose a correct methodology in order to achieve accuracy. Gallagher (1992) notes that within this hermeneutic tradition, "to fail to reproduce the object of interpretation is to invalidate the interpretation and to fall into subjective relativism" (p. 241). The unresolved question or aporia inherent in conservative hermeneutics is that reproduction assumes an objective interpretation and an autonomous object. Conservative hermeneutics is a hermeneutics of trust and faithfulness to meaning. Reproduction is understood as the successful reconstruction of "original meanings and original intentions," and it is the "conscious result of a methodological procedure of interpretation" (p. 141). Notwithstanding its shortsightedness, this interpretive lens assists in recognizing traditions inherent within discourses. The danger is that one lives life deceptively as appropriation.

The following narratives regarding Jolene, Robert, and Billy, for instance, reveal some conservative understandings of pedagogical traditions: Traditions that require particular instances of "professional", "student", and "authority". Operating throughout these narratives are preauthorized hierarchical arrangements between adult and child, student and teacher that function within a fixed understanding of school curriculum such that all of these students could be said to experience some appropriation of their interiorities. Student interiorities are challenged by the traditional needs of power, control, adult, child, curriculum, punishment, and consequence with little recognition of the way in which these particular students call into question particular applications and interpretations of these pedagogical traditions or the way in which they cause these traditions themselves to "tremble".

Nonetheless, from within a conservative hermeneutic methodology, one might critique the way the professionals in the narratives interpreted these pedagogical terms and their traditional values, but it is my proposition that such a critique would remain quite impoverished without being placed into play with a more expanded understanding of the hermeneutic interest. The conservative hermeneutic assumes a methodology that can reproduce, but the expanded hermeneutic literature cautions that reproduction is always interpretive and inexact. A teacher's enactment of authority, curriculum, discipline or consequence, are all interpretives that do not necessarily represent the one and only pre-given way to discipline, to engage curricular intents, to consequence or to be authoritative. In the narratives, there is little acknowledgement regarding the interpretive and incomplete nature of expertise, professionalism, and of "curriculum implementation". As such, there is a lack of willingness to stand in critique regarding the particular interpretives that have been brought to each situation. Gallagher (1992) points out the way in which the educative aim to reproduce generations based upon parent values and ideologies has failed throughout time, noting that, "the rule is gradual transformation rather than reproduction: Generations are never exactly the same; race and gender relations are understood differently; even the nature of social classes changes" (p. 262).

What the conservative hermeneutic does to the question of pedagogical intent is that it focuses on the preparation of students and their successful engagement in curricular traditions. Pedagogical intent is understood as that which prepares students to successfully engage in particular roles and responsibilities as defined by normalizing schooling hierarchies and structures that differentiate the role of the student and the role of the teacher. A conservative hermeneutic has the potential to focus attention towards the socialization of the student or lack thereof and away from the inexact, highly interpretive nature of teaching. Examination of the appropriateness and relevance of traditions in the present lives of students and teachers is also absented from the question of pedagogical intent by a conservative hermeneutic perspective since an accurate appropriation of one's own life to traditional imperatives becomes the educative aim.

Critical Hermeneutics.

Critical hermeneutics explicated by Habermas (1968/1971), Giroux (1981), Friere (1970), and Apple (1982), and as reviewed by Gallagher (1992) holds as its aim the liberation of exploited persons and classes. Interpretation is used to discover the taken-for-granted ideologies within our belief systems thereby exposing "false consciousness". Critical hermeneutics attempts to critique the relations of power inherent in traditions, and to expose their institutionalized, reproductive exploitations of persons and classes. Gallagher notes that this hermeneutic attempts an "escape from the domination of repressive traditions to attain an ideologically neutral, tradition-free, prejudice-free communication" (240). Whereas conservative hermeneutics is founded on trust, a critical hermeneutic operates on suspicion. The former hermeneutic is criticized for its naivety, and its unreflective and reproductive nature. Gallagher states that "for the critical hermeneutics of suspicion, to reproduce the object of interpretation is to legitimize the traditional power structures associated with it and to fall under the spell of false consciousness" (p. 241). Critical hermeneutics maintains that communication is distorted by extralinguistic forces such as power, class structure, labor relations, material distribution, and socialization, and that "critical reflection can neutralize the language context of tradition as well as the extralinguistic forces which distort interpretation" (p. 243), thus removing their ability to function as a prejudice. Within this hermeneutic tradition, educators attempt to neutralize their own educative processes through self-reflective methodologies in order to emancipate their pedagogical interpretives from authority structures. Gallagher notes that "for critical theory, a reflective understanding of where student and teacher stand within the hegemonically distorted communication system of education allows them to gain control over their experiences" (p. 256).

As such, critical hermeneutics focuses the question of pedagogical intent on the power relations that define the student/teacher relationship in order to challenge these power relations and to provide latitude for increased student self-actualization. The critical hermeneutic is unconcerned about the normalizing needs of the school environment. Pedagogical intent is focused away from correcting student behaviour or marginalizing student interests in order to maintain these structures and power relations; rather, critical pedagogies concern themselves with empowering students to realize their unique interests and educative goals.

Notwithstanding such possibility for critique, the history of critical theory is populated by real-world horrors and social devastations, and the question must be asked how far an educational leader can be expected to go in addressing a limit situation by destabilizing the present system through a critical hermeneutic application. Gallagher (1992) cautions that critical hermeneutics falls short of its emancipative goal noting the way in which transformation merely "substitutes one set of constraints for another as revolution substitutes one regime for another" (p. 262). Even in revolution or consensus, the hermeneutic circle collapses and interpretation becomes fixed by social consensus as truth. An unresolved question remains, "Can consciousness actually be unconstrained by the effects of tradition, power relations, and language?"

The intended aim of this study is to examine the difficulty for educational leaders in remaining pedagogically centered during attempts at conflict resolution and to provide some possibilities for understanding. As such, it is neither the intent to operationalize some methodology of reproduction nor to rewrite the educational system towards some new, pre-determined relations of power or curricular intents. The influence that a critical or a conservative hermeneutic has on this study is that an awareness of the particular ways of understanding school organization and structure, relations of power, traditions, curriculum, childhood, and classifications that the above mentioned hermeneutic traditions offer opens up a philosophic ground for pedagogical action that provides greater capacity to act within and through a tactful understanding of pedagogical intent within given situations. As such, the radical and moderate hermeneutics as outlined below offer possibilities for hope for educational leadership at the limit situation of pedagogical practice.

Radical Hermeneutics.

Radical hermeneutics as discussed by Derrida (1981), Nietzsche (1967), Foucault (1980), Caputo (1987), and Gallagher (1992) is relevant to the concerns regarding subjectivities as expressed earlier in this study. In radical hermeneutics, method is displaced by play, and the outcome is at most fresh insight. This hermeneutic utilizes interpretation enframed by deconstruction to displace grand narratives through a surfacing of their metaphysical underpinnings. Deconstruction was understood by Heidegger as a way of engaging in conversation with taken-for-granted, alienated words: "To make the words speak again and to rediscover the experience of being (Gallagher 1992, p. 23). Gallagher notes that one "looks to the text itself for the prescribed sign that would enable a deconstructive reading" (p. 279) such that the interpreter discovers "the linguistic constraints under which the author operates…what he (sic) commands and what he (sic) does not command of the patterns of the language that he (sic) uses" (p. 280) in an attempt to discover possibility through suspicion. Radical hermeneutics settles on the indeterminacy of interpretation because there is a recognition that one cannot escape one's subjectivity, and that any pulling out of the text an object of interpretation is itself an interpretive act that temporarily privileges one meaning over many possible others, thus unraveling "the metaphysical belief in the reality and the identity of the referent—objectivity, subjectivity, presence, being, truth, or any other metaphysical concept operative in the Western tradition" (p. 283). Unlike critical hermeneutics where there is a search for unity through conversation and in which there is faith in the emancipative power of reflection, with radical hermeneutics unity and identity are replaced by a surplus of meanings, and all versions remain contingent, historically located, and suspect. There is no promise of emancipation, and there remains significant mistrust in conversation as a hermeneutic experience.

Nonetheless, deconstruction is helpful in that it looks to opposition as a symptom that points to something else, some gestalt, for instance, that both generates and confines our current actions. In *Positions*, Derrida (1972/1981) discusses how conflict calls one to the limits of one's practice when such conflict is seen as a symptom of those limits. He explains that deconstruction is first and foremost a means for overturning

> the hierarchy at a given moment. To overlook this phase of overturning is to forget the conflictual and subordinating structure of opposition. Therefore one might proceed too quickly to a n*eutralization* that *in practice* would leave the previous field untouched, leaving one no hold on the previous opposition, thereby preventing any means of *intervening* in the field effectively. (His emphasis, p. 41)

In this way, radical hermeneutics does offer possibilities for educational leaders caught in the middle of things, as is the condition of all human activity. Within this hermeneutic tradition educational leaders remain suspect of the various subjectivities that inform a conflict situation with students. They might view such conflicts as the limit situations that surface these subjectivities. The radical hermeneutic educational leader engages sensitively in listening and hearing that which reverberates through the linguistic pronouncements and that which remains silent when attempting to resolve conflict. Far from releasing one from responsibility, deconstruction requires that the educational leader remain radically suspicious of the decisions that emerge during attempts at conflict resolution, and to listen for the way in which these solutions may be directed at discrediting children's/students' subjectivities in order to legitimize some unexamined and possibly unconscionable adult/teacher identities.

Herein remains hope for greater insight regarding the limits of our professional discourses and practices. In order for educators to locate their latitude, otherwise referred to as their agency (a necessary feature of pedagogical intent), when dealing with student/teacher conflicts, they need to be able to recognize ways in which they have too closely come to identify with procedures of power and with traditions that are being called into question through any conflict situation. Gallagher identifies two tasks for deconstruction in education: "to develop a practical critique of education" and to engage in an ongoing, intensive transformation of the educational project (p. 291). Hence, deconstruction is an instrument of hopefulness that, for example, offers possibilities for our pedagogical responsiveness to children that exist beyond the limits of our current practices as these practices are called into question by conflict situations.

Notwithstanding the great value that deconstruction brings to attempts at conflict resolution, an unresolved question remains regarding the possibility of emergent, hidden radical authorities that displace tradition. Gallagher (1992) refers to Edward Said's insight that "radical pedagogy, at least the deconstructive kind, shifts authority to the teacher [and to educational leaders] by deconstructing everything except the deconstructor herself" (p. 314) He states:

> The authority of the teacher may be apparent in traditional pedagogies, but the hidden, implicit control of the teacher over the radical pedagogical scene operates as an even more powerful authority structure precisely because it is

> disguised. That power operates more effectively when hidden is a principle that most poststructuralists recognize. (p. 314)

This same caution applies, of course, to educational leaders engaged in radical discourse. It is precisely this caution that justifies a call to resolve conflict in educational settings through conversation wherever possible; yet, the radical hermeneutic displaces conversation with suspicion. The question remains, "Can conversation be achieved through suspicion?" This question becomes important for understanding the role of leadership at the limit situation of pedagogical practice. How does effective leadership remain committed to pedagogical intent at the limit situation without becoming unduly destabilizing to the modernist pedagogies that populate our school systems? How does educational leadership ensure that it is not simply privileging another unexamined discourse simply because this discourse represents the limit situation? And how does an educational leader remain sensitive to the radical hermeneutic impulse, but still committed to solving problems within acceptable communal actions achieved through conversation?

Moderate Hermeneutics.

In his discussions on "moderate hermeneutics", which Gadamer refers to as philosophical hermeneutics, Gallagher (1992) places all other hermeneutics into play through conversation. Unlike the critical and conservative approaches explained above, this hermeneutic views prejudice as an inescapable reality that not only limits, but that also structures and makes interpretation possible. Gallagher notes that what critical theory calls misunderstanding (the misunderstanding of self in the power relations that currently structure family, society, institution, and the pedagogic reduction itself), philosophical hermeneutics identifies as "preconceptions of understanding and traditions into which we enter (are pulled) through the medium of language and a process that is larger than human subjectivity" (p. 268).

In Gadamer's (1960/1989) philosophical hermeneutics, language assumes a significant importance. He writes, "Language is the medium in which substantive understanding and agreement take place between two people" (p. 384). He further notes that the hermeneutic problem is concerned with achieving "a proper understanding about the subject matter, which takes place in the medium of language" (p. 385). What is important about language is that it carries with it the totality of the experience from which it comes and to which it refers. Gadamer suggests that:

> Every word causes the whole of the language to which it belongs to resonate and the whole world-view that underlies it to appear. Thus every word, as the event of a moment, carries with it the unsaid, to which it is related by responding and summoning. (p. 458)

Ricoeur (1973) discusses the polysemic nature of the "word" which assumes a particular unifying meaning within a given context, but at the same time from outside the context acquires other meanings. He suggests that a "sensitivity to contexts is the necessary complement and the unavoidable counterpart of polysemy" (p. 113). The work of interpretation becomes "recognizing which relatively univocal message the speaker has constructed upon the polysemic base of the common lexicon" (p. 113). He talks about this context as discourse—the medium through which meaning is mediated—and about the necessity of hermeneutics to appeal to discourse itself (pp. 131-132).

In the context of this study, philosophical hermeneutics invites a sensitivity to words such as consequence, discipline, order, control, natural justice and a variety of other unifying terms. In so doing, questions such as the following can be asked: What do these terms mean in the context of school practices? In what ways are the terms conventionally used? What relations of power, what features of teaching and learning or school organization make it possible to use these terms in the ways they are being employed? What world of meaning is brought forth in the use of such words?

When educators talk about "consequencing students", what is revealed by the linguistic shift from using consequence as a noun to this new use as a transitive verb? In this research, I am proposing that by subtly shifting from consequence as a noun to consequencing as a transitive verb and by creating a public discourse of order and control through this shift, adult actions directed at students become unquestioningly legitimated as rightful, professional sources of correcting student "misbehaviour" to restore limits, order, control, and "required" boundaries and roles that enable the fulfillment of agreed to educative interests. In the upcoming narrative involving Sylvia and Jolene, Sylvia will use the terms order and control to mean ensuring that students comply with adult wishes, and that they don't appear to be questioning these wishes. The narrative, however, will call into question another kind of order and control, which is the need for adults to respect the boundaries that society recognizes as appropriate and that protect children from what it terms as adult aggression or abuse. These meanings emerge from related but varied contexts. The former context references the traditional understanding of the teacher-student relationship and the hierarchical power relations inherent within that relationship. One looks at the way in which a classroom is operated upon rules enforced by the teacher and complied with by students. Likewise, the word discipline assumes a legitimating capacity that justifies adult decision-making relative to consequences either in the form of punishment, sanction, exclusion, or restorative activity on the student's behalf. Consequences come to be understood as "natural" as though they lack the interpretive quality that imbues human decision-making. In other contexts, the word "consequence" takes on a variety of meanings. *Webster's Third International Dictionary* defines consequence six ways beginning with "something that is produced by a cause or follows from a form of necessary connections or from a set of conditions" (p. 482). Subsequent definitions connect the term to reasoned responses. To call a punishment a natural consequence belies the fact that there is an interpretive frame at work in settling upon a particular consequence. Such language usage serves to exonerate adulthood and reason as they stand in relationship to childhood as experienced in the composite narratives regarding Jolene, Robert, and Billy. The word discipline also seems to take on a reifying quality as it is used to justify adult responses to student "defiance" (a pejorative term for the word resistance which in critical theory assumes a justifiable political act). Contrarily, disciplining in a Buddhist context connotes the sense of discipling and looks quite different than the way it is usually referred to in the schooling context as explained above. This analysis in no way suggests that there are no schools or classrooms where more equitable power relations exist. It merely points to the fact that hierarchical ones are quite operative as well and often are implicated during conflict.

Gallagher emphasizes that pre-understandings are inherent in language and tradition, and like Gadamer, he positions prejudice as the generative grounding upon which interpretation occurs. He recognizes tradition, language, culture, and personal subjectivity both as the fertile grounds upon which conversation can occur, and as that that gets transformed through dialogue. Gallagher notes that even though "education seems to involve hegemonic relationships in its very nature, that is, authority relationships between teacher and student or system and student" (p. 269), he goes on to suggest that "one overcomes the problem of hegemony through conversation" (p. 270). Conversation is positioned as a play amongst subjectivities, and insight occurs as a result of a fusing of historically conditioned horizons. This hermeneutic of dialogue views emancipation as a process "within educational experience, rather than the end result of critical reflection." (p. 272). Historicity places constraints on reflection, and total emancipation is neither possible nor desirable. To be emancipated from everything would be to not live in any given moment of time, place, social occasion, or history. Moderate hermeneutics terms this recognition of incomplete emancipation as the desirable state of "emancipation of participation" (p. 273).

Moderate hermeneutics is comfortable with ambiguity and the dialogical character of inquiry. Although like its radical and critical cousins, moderate hermeneutics attempts to identify blind prejudices that limit interpretation, it goes further and adopts Piaget's cognitive findings that all knowledge is already known in that it relies upon pre-existing schemas that become altered through conversations with familiar unfamiliarities. Learning is almost recollected, but not quite.

Nonetheless, criticism is leveled against moderate hermeneutics by the radical tradition with regard to its politeness and accommodative nature. It lacks the intensity of suspicion and hinges inquiry upon trust. It places faith in the dialectic structuring of conversation that to critical theorists fails to answer the call for redesigned pedagogies, curricula, and schooling structures because conversation is "always constrained by the process of tradition" (Gallagher 1992, p. 313). Unlike radical hermeneutics that displaces conversation with suspicion, moderate hermeneutics recognizes the sense in which both suspicion and trust operate in and through conversation which itself "takes on the shape of the hermeneutic circle" (p. 311).

Moderate hermeneutics, while recognizing the ambiguities and surplus of meanings inherent in pedagogical intent, unlike its radical cousin, positions intent as a communicative process capable of establishing temporarily held pedagogical meanings and understandings. Moderate hermeneutics operates through conversation as the medium through which it achieves pedagogical relevance in given situations.

Conversation as Hermeneutic Inquiry

In preparing for and conducting this study, I have held discussions with various mentors and friends. Each has contributed extensively to the thoughts, questions, and interests explored in this paper. I have been privileged to converse with various authors through their texts, placing their various perspectives into play. This dialogical structure to conversation and reading is very apparent to me. I recall reading papers and texts on curriculum, philosophy, and educational theory when I began my doctoral studies. The struggle I had in working through the texts was very apparent to me: Often I felt merely perched on the sidelines of some ongoing conversation to which I was only minimally privy. I remember when I first began reading Foucault: How I struggled with becoming familiar with the unsaid dialogue that structured much of his writings. In gaining some understanding I was required to spend hours in conversations with other authors and previous writings that helped inform Foucault's own thoughts. This same exercise occurred again as I began reading Smith's writings which too contained rich historical fore-structuring. My readings of Gadamer's *Truth and Method* required conversations with Caputo on Heidegger, and van Manen on phenomenology and many other background readings so that I could engage in conversation with Gadamer to a reasonable level of comfort. Now, when I read Foucault, I hear Derrida and Heidegger, but I also hear Habermas posing some thoughtful questions.

After putting this question on pedagogy away for a period (I began this inquiry a couple years ago), in coming back to it, I have engaged once again in conversation with a variety of writers. This exercise of putting inquiry to paper as a way of structuring my thoughts has revealed to me anew what Gadamer said about the nature of conversation that is inherent in reading and writing, and that structures inquiry. Really, this present inquiry in its present form represents an ongoing conversation with my narratives, the mentors whom I have read, and the others with whom I have spoken. Aylesworth (1991) defines the hermeneutic circle as a "process of dialogue between the text and reader. With dialogue, one is never sure of the direction that it will take. Even in this current writing, I never began with a clear understanding of where I was headed. I had some thoughts and interests, but this writing has posed new questions. The many texts to which I referred in putting this inquiry to print informed me in new ways that differed from my past readings of these same texts. New pages fell open, and new lines caught my ear. Some past highlights appeared of less consequence regarding this current dialogue, whereas some previously unhighlighted phrases took on new relevance.

It is in this way that Gadamer talks about conversation as a form of inquiry. New horizons emerge from the dialogical interplay of which conversation is. Aylesworth (1991) writes that "Gadamer views dialogue as an application of traditional habituations (prejudices) to new and unpredictable situations" (p.67). Davey (1991) adds, "Discursive speech expresses the ontological event of understanding achieved in and through language…Discursive speech is "speculative," directing itself via the said to the unsaid" (p.53). For instance, in this study, conflict is positioned as a "said" in the form of a negativity of experiences that are posing certain questions regarding pedagogical intent, and causing certain taken-for-granted schemas about professionalism, curriculum, child, and adult to reverberate and inform this discussion.

In order for discourse to be revealing it needs to be "broken open by the question" (Gadamer 1960/1989, p. 363). The question, throws that which is questioned into a particular light and opens it for examination. Gadamer notes that all questions have a horizon or context in which they reverberate, and that "a question occurs to us that breaks through into the open and thereby makes an answer possible" (p. 366). In this particular study, the question, "How does an educational leader remain faithful to pedagogical intent?" exposes itself through the necessity of conflict situations in the day-to-day lives of educators and children. Gadamer further suggests that "the art of questioning is the art of questioning ever further—i.e., the art of thinking" (p. 367). For instance, in this study the above question also begs to know, "What about pedagogical intent addresses us as leaders through student/teacher conflict?" Gadamer suggests that questioning is located in dialogue and in conversation, that "conversation has a spirit of its own, and that the language in which it is conducted bears its own truth within it—i.e., that it allows something to emerge which henceforth exists" (pg. 383). In other words, conversation is a way of coming to an understanding. In this study, there is a relationship that exists between the narratives and me: A particular relationship that will generate its own tentatively held truths. Gadamer confirms, "there is a reciprocal relationship that exists between the interpreter and the text, and that corresponds to the reciprocity involved in reaching an understanding in conversation" (p. 387). The narratives in this study will speak through the interpretations I bring to them, and they will be given meaning, historically, professionally, and personally situated, no doubt, but they will reverberate with the understandings that emerge from our conversation. Gadamer talks about the conversation between text and interpreter as a "perfectly legitimate…hermeneutic conversation" (p. 388). Although through conversation I have attempted to understand the narratives themselves, a hermeneutic of interpretation recognizes that my own thoughts, pre-conceptions, and experiences have gone into "reawakening the text's meaning" (p. 388). Gadamer notes that within this interpretive act:

> The interpreter's own horizon is decisive, yet not as a personal standpoint that he (sic) maintains or enforces, but more as an opinion and a possibility that one brings into play and puts at risk and that helps one truly to make one's own what the text says. (p. 388)

It is this that Gadamer means when he talks about the fusion of horizons as like in a verbal conversation with two people who are bound together by a common subject matter and a common desire to come to know. For comparative purpose, Gadamer's thoughts on dialogue reflect such similarities:

> In dialogue spoken language—in the process of question and answer, giving and taking, talking at cross purposes and seeing each other's point—performs the communication of meaning that with respect to the written tradition is the task of hermeneutics." (p. 368)

In this study, although I will put the originating question to the narratives, Gadamer suggests that it is really the text "that puts a question to the interpreter. Thus, interpretation always involves a relation to the question that is asked of the interpreter" (pp. 369-370). In conversation, the question to which the text is assumed to be an answer is restructured, and the inquirer stands within a new horizon of understanding as described above (p. 374). However, as this study unfolds, more and more questions will surface: The latest one "What about pedagogical intent addresses us as leaders through student/teacher conflict?" seems significant, and meaningful, and deserving of attention.

The Circular Structure of Inquiry

The back and forth relationship between whole and parts, tradition and interpretation that assures reliability and validity in hermeneutic study is what is referred to as the hermeneutic circle or the circular structure of learning. In his comprehensive discussion of this topic, Gallagher (1992, pp. 58-81) delineates the various hermeneutic traditions and the various ways in which they articulate an engagement with the hermeneutic circle. He notes that in accordance with Schleiermacher's conservative hermeneutic, the meaning of the parts is only understood within the context of the whole, but the whole is never given unless through an understanding of the parts, thus constituting a circular development in understanding. For both Dilthey and Schleiermacher, the text is understood from within an objective, historical background, with the author's particular use of language and intention being the subjective elements that require reconciliation (p. 59). This objectification of the historical context represents a potential collapse, nonetheless, that confines possibility to tradition and ideology, unless, of course, tradition is actually enlarged by each encounter with the particular field of action through which it finds its expression.

Phenomenological hermeneutics asserts that "every experience has its own horizon" (Husserl 1973, pages 31-32 as quoted in Gallagher (1992, p. 60). It has both an originating horizon and the interpretive horizon by which it becomes known. The circular structure of understanding occurs ontologically as meaningfulness of an experience becomes understood from within a pre-intuited state of knowing which itself expands by its encounter with experience. For instance, there are various understandings regarding pedagogical intent that will structure the responses of the individuals within the narratives contained within this study. Each of these interpretations will be thrown into play during crisis and conflict resolution. Some of the characters' enactments of pedagogical intent will seem somewhat consistent with the theoretical precept that pedagogical intent is about understanding how one is hermeneutically both connected with and disconnected from the wellbeing of students in a particular situation or exchange. Other characters' pedagogical practices will seem more consistent with the notion that one orients oneself towards children through curricular traditions that require obedience to authority, order and control, and that there are winners and losers at the limit situations of these curriculum traditions: The losers usually being children who become sorted and sifted through an exercise of pedagogical authority and expertise, through programming, discipline and control as previously discussed. The narrated situations involving Billy, Jolene, and Robert will place these pedagogical enactments into play, eliciting conflict and tension.

The participants' various interpretations arise out of differing curricular traditions. For Sylvia, Don, and Calvin, who will appear to enact comfortably from within a conservative hermeneutic interpretive, the subjectivity of the child is all that needs to be called into question, and pedagogy is directionally focused towards deficiency, defiance or lack on the child's part. Jim, Terry, and Jerry will appear to operate somewhat more comfortably from within a philosophical hermeneutic horizon that both identifies pedagogy as possibility by acquainting oneself with the other as "Thou" capable of critiquing self and of being critiqued by self, and that places tradition and individuals in an ever expanding circular relationship.

Schleiermacher notes that the circular structure of understanding collapses once there is a complete union of text and tradition or parts and whole within a consolidated, "perfect knowing"—an endpoint in human exploration. In accordance with Heidegger's radical hermeneutics, Gadamer (1960/1989) disagrees. In his discussion regarding a philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer notes that since human knowledge is forestructured by unknown biases or fore-projections, interpretation is never complete but that revision is the "first, last, and constant task" of human understanding (p. 267). One never escapes the circular structure of understanding; rather, one enters into it through multi-various pathways of experience and reflexivity (Gallagher (1992, p. 65). Meaning is recollected forwards as both the forestructure and the horizon of understanding become ever expanded, ever known differently. Gadamer (1960/1989) notes that:

> Understanding is always a movement in this kind of circle, which is why the repeated return from the whole to the parts, and vice versa, is essential. Moreover, this circle is constantly expanding, since the concept of the whole is relative, and being integrated in ever larger contexts affects the understanding of the individual parts. (p. 190)

This back and forth tensionality establishes a dialectic with the potential to structure conversation. This dialectic structure in hermeneutics provides the fertile ground from which learning and interpretation can emerge. Gallagher (1992) agrees with Gadamer noting that "the hermeneutic circle is another way to express the openness that is necessary for learning. If the openness is closed off, if the circle collapses into its center, learning ceases" (p. 77). From Gallagher it can be inferred that experiences at the limit situation of localized pedagogical practices would cease to be instructive (p. 80). As such, any possibilities for remaining pedagogically faithful that have surfaced throughout this study are understood within the tensionality of the hermeneutic circle, somewhere between knowing and not knowing, discovering and searching, recollecting and creating.

Limitations

This study is not about a discovery of the truth behind pedagogical intent; rather, it is about an unconcealment of this intent even as it conceals. Throughout this study, certain questions about pedagogical intent will arise that hopefully provide some meaningful and significant insight into the ability to remain pedagogical during attempts at conflict resolution. Even so, just as certain questions have given rise to this inquiry and will continue to emerge throughout, others will remain silent and concealed by the louder voices that become privileged through my own biases, preferences, attitudes, and past experiences of which I may remain unaware, and by the preferences, attitudes, and experiences to which I remain consciously faithful.

This study is about a process of coming into my own pedagogical being as an educational leader. In quoting Ricoeur, Tappan and Brown (1989) add that narrative inquiry is formative because to write a narrative, one has already reflected on the event being narrated and the narration of that event (p. 192). Nonetheless, what is discovered is not a positive finding or resolution once and for all, but rather a greater understanding of self relative to the question that the composite narratives and their juxtapositioning with narrative inquiry as a hermeneutic discourse pose.

Chapter III

Discovering the Text of Leadership through Narrative

Writing Composite Narratives

The following narrative is a composite of approximately four remembered incidents from my own combined experiences as principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent of schools over 12 years in public education. As discussed previously, narrative study is a valid way to explore lived experiences. Composites combine various lived experiences but remain faithful to the essence of those experiences even though from a factual lens, they are fictions. None of the characters or events is factual, but the essences of action, thought, struggle, conflict, decision-making, and outcome are authored by the imaginings, somewhat at least, of the same ethic that both lived and recollected the actual formulating experiences (Jamieson, 1993).

By way of introduction, this composite tries to represent the essence of those experiences that required struggle to ensure that students were not sacrificed to give an appearance of order and control, and appropriateness; or because they were the path of least resistance; or because they fell victim to the projections of an unsurfaced belief in "adult credibility versus childhood imaginings and inventions".

Jolene's Hurt

Jolene was a somewhat demure student, but very affable with her peers. She wasn't a star achiever, but she got by. She liked to have fun, and it showed in her marks. Jolene usually enjoyed being in Mr. McTouchy's class because he added laughter and lightness to the atmosphere. Nonetheless, she had a niggling feeling that he crossed the line with students: Too into their business. When they were talking in class, just killing time discussing their evening activities, "McTouchy paid a bit too much attention to their personal affairs," she decided. He would laugh and make wise comments just like he was one of the gang, so to speak. The boys liked him, but a few of the girls, Jolene included, felt a little "weirded out" by Mc Touchy. They felt he invaded their personal space and was just a bit too friendly. Jolene felt comfortable with her other classmates around, but she wouldn't want to be in the room by herself with him; yet, most of the kids said, "Ah, it's just Mc Touchy's way, no big deal." They felt he was a bit weird, but that was it, nothing more, really. They liked to joke about him, though: Some of them would refer to him as "the perve", but they liked being in his class. He was a pretty good teacher after all, he knew his stuff, made it fun, and he gave them some slack.

Mr. Mc Touchy's colleagues and superiors thought of him as a friendly teacher who seemed to relate well with students. Some thought he could tighten up a bit in his control, but overall he seemed to know what he was doing. He could sure talk about social studies, and he did very well with his coaching. He did a lot of coaching, and consequently, they weren't pressured to do much.

His supervisors generally liked his work. They thought he was a dedicated teacher who cared about students. His teacher reports indicated a positive student/teacher rapport; however, an early report indicated a need to ensure that this rapport was based on appropriate, effective student/teacher relations.

At first, Jolene did not have the courage to tell anyone about what happened to her. Instead, she wondered why she stayed back without her friends when Mr. McTouchy told her to remain after the dismissal buzzer rang. "How could I have been so stupid?" she admonished herself. She also wondered, "Why me?" "What did I do that that perve thought it would be okay?"

He said he wanted to talk to her about her late assignment.

Jolene wisecracked back as usual, "Right, done tonight, main thing on my agenda," and she laughed with her friends; but he seemed a bit testier about this "late".

McTouchy usually gave quite a bit of latitude about due dates. He would often threaten to dock marks for lateness, and then relent when the students begged for leniency, but not this time. "It was close to report cards," she remembered.

After the rest of the class left, Jolene remained in her seat. Mr. McTouchy approached her with his ruler in hand, "for special effects," Jolene thought. When he got up to her, he perched on her desktop and looked squarely down on her face. Jolene felt uncomfortably close and awkward, so she dropped her gaze.

Mr. Mc Touchy remarked, "tonight, instead of making it with the boys," at which point he touched her with his ruler on her belly, moved it up to just under her breast, paused or so it seemed like forever to her, and then pressed it under her chin to raise her head to make eye contact. Jolene felt totally humiliated, uncomfortable, and guilty.

Mc Touchy continued, "You stay home and complete Mr. Mc Touchy's essay or tomorrow you get a zero. Got it?"

Jolene replied, "Yes," and embarrassed she got up to leave. As she was leaving, Mr. Mc Touchy reminded her that this essay was worth 10% of her term mark, and that she needed this mark to get even a C on her second term report card.

As she fixated on this incident in her now noisy head, Jolene never really felt that Mr. Mc Touchy was after sex or anything, but she felt violated by him nonetheless. She also felt responsible in a mixed-up-kind-of-way because of the manner in which they all crossed the line together in class, letting Mc Touchy know too much about their personal lives with their friends and boyfriends: Not directly, but by what he would overhear in their conversations and then take part, always in a jocular sort of way. She even wondered if maybe she led him on somehow.

Anyway, Jolene went home, and completed her essay. She continued to "feel freaked" by this incident, and that night when she went to bed, Jolene cried about it, not knowing what to do.

The next day Jolene handed in her essay. It looked to her like Mr. Mc Touchy seemed a bit embarrassed, and it was then that she decided to tell her best friend Rachel. Rachel was not a bit shy, and she was less reserved than Jolene. When she heard her friend's story, she said, "I told you he was freaky!" Jolene begged Rachel not to tell anyone, but she felt better that she told her friend, and now it wasn't just her secret. Somehow the telling helped her feel a little less dirty.

That evening, Rachel just couldn't contain herself so she told her mother all about Jolene's troubling experience. She knew it was wrong to keep Jolene's experience a secret, because her mother had always warned her that if something doesn't feel right, then it isn't. Her mother also warned her throughout her years to not keep such happenings secret from her parents.

Rachel recalled learning these same lessons in her sex education classes in school. Rachel's mother advised her to talk to Jolene the next day and tell her that Jolene had to go to the principal with this news or Rachel's mother would. She praised her daughter and assured her, "You did the right thing telling me, honey, but," she cautioned Rachel, "we have heard only one side. Although Jolene really feels this thing happened the way she remembers it, it is the principal's job to sort out what really happened. A man's reputation is at stake so we best not talk about it until we know the facts."

The next morning, in the girl's washroom, Jolene broke down and cried when Rachel informed her of the evening's happenings.

She pleaded with her friend, "Rach, I just want this thing to go away. I don't want to be the school's freak case, you know!"

Rachel apologized to Jolene, but she assured her telling the principal was the right thing to do. "Who knows what he will do next!" she exclaimed.

After much persuasion, reluctantly, Jolene agreed to go to the principal if Rachel went with her. Her heart pounded as she talked with the secretary about why they were there. The wait felt like forever as she sat with Rachel in the chairs by the principal's door waiting to be summoned.

Ms. Hammer was busy working on the final copy of the school's growth plan that was due in central office the next day. She felt a bit annoyed when the interruption came that Jolene Ayers wanted to see her about something regarding Mr. McTouchy.

Although she wasn't a problem student, Jolene was not one of the school's star students. In fact, Ms. Hammer recalled that she was just average, if that, in achievement, and that Jolene did not pay much heed to her studies. She was also annoyed because if Jolene had something to say about Mr. Mc Touchy, a teacher who gets along well with everyone, why didn't she just go and talk to him? Ms. Hammer felt that she had to be very careful that she didn't give the impression that it was okay to come to her office complaining about a teacher, willy-nilly!

"How would they keep order and control if students thought they could complain to the principal every time they didn't like something a teacher did?" she pondered as she opened her door.

Immediately, Jolene wanted to sink back in her chair. By the look on Ms. Hammer's face, Jolene knew she should never have been talked into coming. Hesitatingly, she got up and followed Rachel into the office. "Hammer was not exactly that great to kids at the best of times", Jolene reflected.

Ms. Hammer queried, business like, "Why are you here?" to Rachel. "Which one of you is here to speak with me?" Rachel responded that Jolene asked her to come along for support because she was afraid to come by herself.

At this, Ms. Hammer noted the concern on Jolene's face, and her own level of concern regarding the nature of this visit heightened. She was only into her second year as a principal following her predecessor under whom she mentored as a vice-principal. Her predecessor kept very tight control of the school, and Ms. Hammer felt that she needed to prove her ability in this regard as well. The community expected a well-run school, with a focus on academics.

Ms. Hammer indicated to the girls the two chairs beside her desk. As they sat, she turned to Jolene and asked her how she could help her. Jolene told her story.

"Oh, shit!" kept pounding through her head as Ms. Hammer heard Jolene out. When Jolene was done, Ms. Hammer raised her voice noticeably and with authority she said, "This is a very serious accusation you are making, you know. Do you know what this could do to Mr. McTouchy's career? You better be certain of your facts before you come into my office making these kinds of accusations, young lady." Ms. Hammer felt relieved that she supported Mr. McTouchy even though she felt annoyed with him at present. She always felt he acted a little too familiar with the students, but it seemed to work for him. She sure hoped that she could keep a lid on this one, for the sake of the school and the teachers. What would the teachers think of her if she let students get away with making these kinds of accusations?"

She turned to Rachel and asked, "Were you in the room when this supposedly happened?"

Rachel replied, "No, Jolene told me about it in the girl's washroom the next day because she was so upset."

Relieved, Ms. Hammer declared, "Since you were not in the room, this is all hearsay, Rachel, and you will need to go back to class. Jolene, Mr. McTouchy, and I will talk about this together. We will figure out what really happened. You are not to talk to anyone about this because it is just gossip from your point of view, do you understand?" she impressed upon Rachel, warning her that she could get into trouble talking about these kinds of matters without knowing first hand.

Ms. Hammer was proud of how she handled Rachel as she watched her go compliantly off to her next class.

As she walked to class, Rachel was glad that she supported her friend. She didn't like the way Ms. Hammer acted as if they were guilty of something, but she did remember her mother's caution. She was glad that Ms. Hammer was going to go over the incident with Jolene and McTouchy to straighten it out. Rachel could hardly keep this secret to herself, and she wished that she could tell her friends. She was also pretty sure that Ms. Hammer would take Mr. McTouchy's side, but Rachel decided that she would have to encourage Jolene to "stick with what she knew happened" and to not be afraid of Ms. Hammer. She felt a bit sorry for Jolene, because as Ms. Hammer razzed her about the seriousness of this accusation, Rachel noticed how Jolene picked at her fingers, a habit her best friend had as a child whenever she was nervous. Just as she opened the door to her social studies class, Mr. McTouchy's class, Rachel began to have doubts that she did the right thing after all.

Jolene was devastated as she watched her friend abandon her to Ms. Hammer's sternness. She wished she could go backwards on this thing and ignore the whole incident. She probably overreacted anyway.

As Ms. Hammer sat down, she resumed, "Jolene, I hope you have had a moment to reconsider what you have just said. I would hope also that you would consider the favor Mr. McTouchy did in allowing you an option to complete a late assignment! If you were in my class, you would have gotten a zero. Could it be that Mr. McTouchy moved close to you, and merely lifted your chin with his ruler to impress on you the importance of getting your assignment in?"

"Maybe, but it didn't really feel that way," she looked down at her feet, feeling guilty again.

"Well, just because you feel some way about something it doesn't mean it happened that way you know. However, because of the seriousness of your accusation, young lady, I will be talking to Mr. McTouchy during next class. Jolene, we will deal with this matter during noon break. Go back to class and remember not to discuss this with other students right now. We need to hear both sides of the story so that you can get a better picture of what happened. You are to come back here at noon break, and you, Mr. Mc Touchy, and I will sit together to work this out, understand?" she asked.

"Yes," Jolene replied almost inaudibly as she wished she never told Rachel about this incident. "Why did Rach have to blow it out of proportion anyway and tell her mom?" Jolene questioned as she followed the principal's directions and left for class.

Jolene could not bring herself to return to class because it was social studies, so she hung out in the washroom instead. She was nervous about having to go back to Ms. Hammer's office and face McTouchy: Especially since he did cut her slack with the assignment, after all. It gave her the willies, and she felt a bit sick to her stomach. "I will never forgive Rachel for opening her big mouth," she decided.

"Oh shit!" Ms. Hammer repeated to herself as she shut her office door. She sat back, grabbed her coffee mug and breathed a deep sigh. She wondered what she should do next. Should she call the new assistant superintendent in charge of student discipline and get a few pointers?

"No," she determined, "This new guy is too much of a soft touch, always listening to students over teachers or at least giving their point of view too much credibility so that teachers don't feel supported." "Too bad the superintendent is away on holidays," she thought. "At least he would know how to keep the lid on this thing and protect the teacher properly before things get out of hand. Why doesn't he take his vacations over Christmas, Easter, and summer like the rest of us?" "No, I will deal with this myself, settle things down and then report it," she decided. Novertheless, she called one of her colleagues, a principal in the district respected for the strong control he keeps over student behaviour in his school.

Bill agreed that Ms. Hammer should proceed without the assistant's help. "Take care of these things yourself and then you can stay in control of the outcome," Bill advised his colleague.

Ms. Hammer felt good about this decision. She sipped on her coffee, too worked up to return to her original task. She took a few deep breaths as she pondered this predicament. "How could that damn McTouchy be so stupid as to get himself into this situation?" she questioned. "I always thought he was a bit too familiar with the kids, and now look!" she bemoaned. Ms. Hammer concluded that McTouchy probably showed some indiscretion in his proximity to and familiarity with Jolene, but she really doubted that this teacher would have touched her belly or her breast with his ruler. At any rate, she was certain that he didn't intend anything sexual by what he did. "I mean, we are talking about a married man with kids, for God's sake, and not a bad teacher to boot!" "And what was that idiotic statement about the boys? What business does he have talking to his students about their relationships after school outside the parameters of a proper lesson?" she questioned as she revisited the details of Jolene's story from the notes that she had taken.

As the period drew to a close, Ms. Hammer called her secretary to page Mr. Mc Touchy who conveniently was on prep this next period.

When the call came, Ivan knew that something was up. He noted that Rachel was late for his social studies class and that Jolene was absent. Rachel became a bit evasive, he thought, when she told him that they were at the office, so he put two and two together and figured they were complaining about him.

"Okay, maybe I got a little too familiar with Jolene the other day," he conceded to himself, "but I didn't really mean to let my ruler touch her, except under her chin. Why did I sit on her desk top, and why didn't I just keep my distance?" he wished. After all, "I was alone with her in my room! How could I be so stupid!" Ivan McTouchy admonished himself as he made his way to the office. He worried about his wife, Marlene. "What will she think if this gets out?" he regretted.

When he rounded the corner, he could tell that Hammer was worked up and that this was big. He felt uncomfortable because Hammer had the reputation of being a bit severe and business-like, "especially for a woman," he thought. Hammer motioned with her head, and they went into the principal's office. McTouchy felt like a kid again as Hammer shut her door and sat down. Mr. McTouchy remained standing. Hammer cleared her throat a few times and proceeded. "Ivan, you will need your staff rep and you need to meet with me and Jolene Ayers in my office at the noon break with regards to an incident that took place the other day following your social studies class. Would you like to get Sam, or would you prefer that I do?"

"Can I ask what this is about?" Ivan asked trying to sound as ignorant and innocent as possible.

"No, you will need your staff rep. Please meet me here at 11:35 sharp and we will have a few minutes together before we call Jolene in." Hammer was glad that she had taken that short course this summer on conducting investigations into misconduct, because she knew the procedure and wouldn't make mistakes in case things backfired on her. She was glad that she remained firm with Ivan and didn't let him speak without his rep.

"All right, 11.35, then," Ivan responded trying to sound as cooperative and naïve of the situation as possible.

At the appointed time the parties met. Sam, the staff rep, was furious when Ms. Hammer relayed Jolene's story. He demanded to know, "Why has this student not followed natural justice by talking to her teacher first, and why are you allowing her to even talk to you prior to this step!"

Feeling a bit intimidated, Ms. Hammer replied, "Sam, part of natural justice is helping to bring the parties together when one party doesn't feel capable of following through, and that is what I am doing. But, because of the seriousness of the allegation, I felt it important that you be here as well."

Ivan interjected, "I am absolutely shocked. Are you insinuating that I had sexual intentions towards this student? Because this is absolutely false!"

"Ivan, I am not insinuating anything, I am merely telling you what this student said. Is there any truth to what she said?"

"No! I merely went up to this student to reinforce the importance of her getting this assignment in to me so I could mark it to complete her term mark. When she rudely looked down at the floor instead of at me, I raised her chin with my ruler to bring her to eye level to make sure that my point was received. That is all I did."

"Did you tell her, quote, 'Instead of making it with the boys tonight, you stay home and do your essay, unquote?" Ms. Hammer grilled.

"Absolutely not!" Mr. McTouchy exclaimed. I might have said something like "Instead of going out with the boys tonight, but I never said making it with the boys," he denied.

"Well, Ivan, I guess we will call Jolene in and straighten this out," Ms. Hammer sighed. She went to the door and told Jolene to grab herself a chair and enter. Jolene kept her gaze low as she entered the office to avoid eye contact with Mr. McTouchy. She was very anxious, especially when she saw her physics teacher, Mr. Travesty. She felt a bit panicked, actually.

Ms. Hammer cleared her throat. "Jolene, to save you the trouble of having to tell your whole story again, I have told Mr. McTouchy and Mr. Travesty what you told me about the other day." "Now, Mr. McTouchy would like to talk to you, so you will need to look at him, do you understand?" her principal directed.

Jolene felt her face go completely red with embarrassment when she looked up at her teacher. "I would rather be dead than be here right now!" she thought.

"Now Jolene, you know that all I was doing was trying to impress upon you the importance of your assignment, don't you?" Mr. McTouchy asked.

"I guess so," Jolene conceded.

"Jolene, I am completely taken aback and insulted by your accusations. I might have said that you were to stay home and not go out with the boys, but I certainly never said anything about making out with the boys, did I?"

Dropping her gaze, Jolene responded softly, almost sounding unsure, "It's what I heard." Tears began to well up.

"Could it be that you heard wrong?" asked Ms. Hammer.

"I suppose, maybe." Jolene replied, wanting to get this interrogation over with. "They are ganging up on me," she thought. "Rachel was right."

"Furthermore, Jolene, I never did touch you with my ruler anywhere but under your chin, did I?"

"I felt more."

"Jolene, do you realize the seriousness of making false accusations against a teacher? Now think very carefully and answer my question, could you have been mistaken about being touched by Mr. McTouchy's ruler except under your chin?"

"Well, Jolene, I don't think I touched you anywhere else. If my ruler brushed against you on the way to your chin it was a complete accident of which I am unaware," interjected Mr. McTouchy, indignantly.

"Jolene, it sounds like you may have read too much into the incident the other day, and that according to Mr. McTouchy, if his ruler brushed you as he went for your chin it was an accident. Now would you like to apologize to Mr. McTouchy for discrediting him when he was only trying to help you complete your work? In fact, he was giving you extra time for a late assignment! Jolene, do you have anything to say to Mr. McTouchy?"

"Yeah, I could be wrong. I am sorry. I should never have said anything," Jolene responded with her head down, hoping that this would appease them, that she could leave, and put this incident behind her.

"Jolene, you may leave, but now that we know the truth about what happened, you straighten this up with Rachel, understand?" Ms. Hammer instructed. "I will check back with both of you girls later to ensure that you have cleared up this matter," she noted.

Ms. Hammer was happy to see Jolene go, but to her surprise, after the door banged shut, Sam hit his fist on the table and demanded, "Is that it? This student falsely accuses this hardworking, innocent teacher, and farewell and a handshake is all she gets! I don't think so. We will demand that this student be disciplined for her false accusation!" he insisted.

Mr. McTouchy would have preferred that this incident just go away. He was happy with the outcome, but he was also glad to have such strong advocacy as Mr. Travesty and the Union behind him.

"Yes, she needs to be disciplined for Ivan's name to be cleared. This false accusation has the potential to blight his career, and she will need to be disciplined to clear him," Sam reiterated.

Sylvia Hammer dabbed at the sweat on her neck. Here she was in her mid-forties, a beginning principal (after a long struggle of trying to "break into the old boy's club," as she put it) and feeling somewhat satisfied about the way she controlled this incident before it got out of hand, and now the union was placing what she considered to be unreasonable demands on her. She did not want to discipline this student, because she felt for sure that more happened than what Ivan was letting on. She suspected that Ivan's act was void of sexual intent, but Sylvia was certain that Jolene did not make her account up and that it was fairly accurate: Especially by the small concession that Ivan made over the ruler possibly touching her. No, Sylvia was pretty sure that there was more to this than what Ivan let on, but maybe not quite as much as Jolene described. "Well, maybe she did exaggerate some," she considered. "But what was Ivan trying to prove?" she wondered silently. As far as Sylvia was concerned, this teacher abused his authority over this student and invaded her personal space, no matter what the intent.

"I am not convinced, Ivan, that you did not go too far with this student." At this, Sam bullied, "how dare you take that position, Sylvia, when the student herself recanted. You heard her, and I heard her."

"Well," Sylvia responded. "I will think about it and determine what action will need to be taken."

Sam and Ivan got up and left, both feeling the delight of victory. Before parting ways, though, Sam took this opportunity to warn Ivan not to cross the line with students by being too familiar or by getting too into their personal space. "You have to behave professionally with kids at all times, Ivan," he reinforced.

Ivan felt lucky this time, and on his way back to his classroom, he admonished himself for being so foolish. "Never again will I get that close to a student," he mumbled. "God, how could I have been so stupid!"

Sylvia didn't feel quite so fortunate. "Shit, I should have called him up after all. Now I can just hear what he is going to say to me. He is probably going to tell me I should have supported Jolene more. What in the hell am I going to do about disciplining this kid? Shit! Why couldn't she have just kept this to herself?" Sylvia vented as she contemplated calling the assistant superintendent.

"Oh Christ!" she bemoaned as she glanced out her office window and saw Rachel's and Jolene's mothers marching into the school with a joint mission to accomplish. Nonetheless, she breathed another deep sigh, stepped out, met them at the door, and invited the ladies into her office.

After some discussion and revisitation of the incident from Ms. Hammer's conservatively, interpreted version of what both parties said, they all agreed that Jolene may have overreacted and misread Mr. McTouchy's actions and intentions, but these parents did not agree that Jolene should be disciplined. In fact, before they left, they insisted that Mr. McTouchy take some responsibility for this unfortunate happening, and that he admit to Jolene that at minimum, he invaded her space.

Now Sylvia Hammer felt clearly "between a rock and a hard place," as her predecessor used to say in these moments, so she reached for the phone to call Mr. Stone.

When the phone rang, the assistant superintendent, Jim Stone, had just finished dealing with his second suspension incident and first parental complaint of the day. He would sure be happy when the superintendent got back to lighten his load. It was Sylvia on the other end, though, so he knew it must be serious, because she never called unless it was important. Sylvia ran a good, orderly school and followed policy well, too well really, so he wondered what had happened.

"Hello, Sylvia, how goes the ball game today?" he asked as an icebreaker.

"I've seen better days, believe me!" she responded, and then she told her story.

"A bit of a big one today, hey, Sylvia," Mr. Stone commented once she finished.

He knew from her voice that Sylvia had second thoughts about the decisions she made in this case, and that although Sylvia, like many of her colleagues, usually supported the teacher when there were conflicting versions between a teacher's versus a student's account of an occurrence, Sylvia really did want to do right by her students. She was trained well in a system that puts order and control, adult authority and legitimacy over and above individual student interests, needs, opinions, and view points, but he could tell that even though Sylvia indicated that it might be best to discipline this Jolene, that she really didn't like the taste it left her with.

Although he was annoyed with what sounded like gross disregard for this student's personal sense of well-being in favor of maintaining order and control, and of protecting another teacher who probably needed to use this indiscretion as a personal learning event if not more, Mr. Stone was growing accustomed to this way of responding to student complaint. Sylvia's story did not surprise him. By and large, most of the principals he worked with understood support for teachers as meaning "back them up with their decisions and take their side during conflict unless it is blatantly obvious that to do so would be unjust or unprofessional, and even then, put on a bit of a show of support. To do otherwise would be paramount to chaos," they believed. "Maybe I am becoming a bit cynical," he considered. But he knew the routine: Student complaint, back the teacher, rationalize the teacher's actions, teach the kid a lesson or maybe even lecture the kid, and send the student on his/her way;

Teacher complaint, discipline the student; Parent complaint, rationalize the teacher's decisions, discipline the student if necessary, agree to disagree or cut a deal if necessary, convince the teacher to cut losses. "Kind of like the Papal blessing over the alter boy," he chuckled cynically to himself. Forget about pedagogy, just restore order and take the path of least resistance. Yes, even though he knew that he really only got wind of the worst of the cases and that everyday principals and teachers repeatedly do right by kids, he was sounding a bit jaded, all right.

Nonetheless, he was still an educational leader, and he intended to handle this case with integrity even though he hated second-guessing how Doug, the superintendent, would handle this or that particular case. He knew that he often didn't see eye-to-eye with his boss, and they often had to agree to disagree. His boss was a systems man who believed every bit as much as the principals did that order and control was more important than pedagogy because order and control was what people understood and saw. To err in favor of teachers was understood as support, to err in favor of students was considered either naïve or a blatant lack of support. Knowing that this was the expectation made Stone feel a little discomfort and stress when these cases arose because he felt like the odd-person-out, so to speak. He hoped that his decisions were oriented towards pedagogy with all the give and take that one needs to exercise in cases where ambiguity is the norm, but he knew his decisions were understood to be unsupportive more than supportive.

"Sylvia, I think I better come see you. We will take our time, talk, and figure out what we need to do in order to look after the student's interests, the teacher's rights and responsibilities, and the union's demands", he summed up their dilemma.

"Just what I suspected," Sylvia thought. There he goes again with that student's interests before all else!" "Well at least it's his problem now too, at any rate," she sighed.

"Thank you, Jim," she replied, "see you in about half an hour."

As he drove, Jim Stone recalled that just last week he had dealt with a similar situation. The teacher, an aggressive, in-your-face man who invades his students' personal space regularly because "it's my style" told a student that she was inappropriately dressed because some cleavage was showing. Dad came in to Jim's office mad as hell calling the teacher a pervert for leering at his daughter, and demanded that his daughter be removed from Revy's class. He related how his older daughter and now his Alice and her friends talk about how weird this Revy guy is, and how they feel creepy around him. "This crap has been going on for years and it better stop," he demanded.

Mr. Stone knew this teacher and didn't have a sense that he was a pervert, but he recalled how they warned him, "Look, Don, your invasive, anachronistic style certainly appears to feel weird to the girls. Because they already feel like you are invading their personal space on a regular basis with your touching and aggression, it interferes with your ability to deal credibly with issues such as this. Furthermore, as a teacher, you are responsible for the impressions with which you leave your students."

Anyway Jim shook his head as he recalled how he helped mom and dad take responsibility for working through mom's own (as disclosed by her), related unresolved issues from her schooling years by sexualizing their daughter with tight, suggestive clothing decorated with inappropriate sayings on them for middle school;

yet, Don Revy remained angry with Jim for confronting him about this touchy, aggressive style. There was no recognition of the great opportunity that this situation held for mom and her own need to get in touch with her parenting responsibilities in regards to this issue. Or for Dad and his now professed acknowledgement of different styles of working with kids that although not well received may not necessarily translate into perversion. No, just thankless finger pointing and blame by the principal and teacher because Jim suggested to them that they take responsibility for the unintended messages that they were giving students about power, control, and invasion of personal space. Now here he was, back again, dealing with a related case.

"Oh well," he shrugged as he pulled up to Red Fern High School, "Just remember to stay focused on what feels right to do in this case," he tried to reassure himself.

"So Sylvia," Jim asked after the greetings and some revisiting of the day's activities, "am I to understand, then, that you suspect that Jolene maliciously reported this teacher's well intended, professionally appropriate behavior as otherwise intended and unprofessional to cause problems of some sort or as a wicked prank?"

"No, of course not," Sylvia replied annoyed and somewhat insulted, "She felt invaded and victimized, no doubt."

"Well, what is our role as educational leaders in these matters, then?" he probed.

"Look, what I tried to do was to minimize the damage and ensure that Ivan's rights were protected. This sort of thing could wreck his career, and he is a pretty good teacher when all is said and done."

"Actually, Sylvia, what you did was intimidate this kid so that she had no option but to recant. Not to put too fine a point on it, but the teacher had his union rep in that room advocating for him. He had the authority of his profession and of his adulthood advocating for him, intimidating this student. Who did she have as her advocate? Sorry, Sylvia, but that is how I see it. Okay, so you have a role of supporting teachers, but when? Always? What about the equally important role of ensuring student wellbeing, about being pedagogical? What about Jolene's need to know that it is okay to come to the principal when something doesn't feel right or Jolene's need to know that when something is amiss, if it is, the principal will be there for her even if no one else is?"

"There he goes again, over confident in the student's account and on a tirade about his favorite word. Doesn't he know yet that people just feel insulted when he throws out terms like 'pedagogy'? Why can't he just say 'appropriate', or 'professional'? Why 'pedagogy?' No one uses that term. Can't he just be practical instead of always using theories and jargon?" Sylvia thought as she listened quietly to her supervisor. She recalled how just recently at their last administrators' association meeting her colleagues had a real go around about Jim and his use of this word pedagogy. She remembered how insulted some of her colleagues felt by that use of the term as though he was judging their ability to make the right decisions because they did not think of their work from a theoretical perspective. "Could you imagine how angry teachers would be if we started using terms like this in our staff meetings!" one of her colleagues noted.

"Well, Sylvia, do you feel Jolene knows this about her principal right now? Have we taken care of this student's needs?" he asked. He noticed how quiet Sylvia became as though her thoughts were elsewhere.

"Obviously not, Jim," Sylvia responded somewhat defensively. "I think I went a bit far in protecting the teacher, no doubt," Sylvia conceded, "but it is what Rick [her predecessor and mentor] would have done, you know, and I'm not sure if Doug [their superintendent] weren't sitting here if he wouldn't be telling me to discipline this student?" she questioned.

"I don't think Doug would. He would want to protect the teacher, but I don't think he would sell this kid out to do it. I think Doug would find a better saw off," Jim responded. He liked Sylvia because she was willing to be a bit more reflective about her actions than would many of her colleagues be in a similar situation. "But Sylvia, how are you going to restore confidence in this kid that she did the right thing letting you know, and that this is not a problem that she created, but that she was on the receiving end of a questionable act?"

"I'm not going to sell Ivan out to do it, but I will call her in and reassure her that she did not do anything wrong, and that if I asked some hard questions it was just to get to the bottom of things. I will thank her for bringing this incident to my attention and assure her that I will deal with it as best as I can. But I will also remind her that overall Ivan is a good teacher," she suggested.

"And you might add that it sounds like he has something to learn about respecting students' personal space, assuring her that you will help him with this. She needs to hear that even though Mr. McTouchy didn't appear to intend anything sexual by his acts, that he will take responsibility for the fact that she felt uncomfortable with what he did, assuring her that it won't happen again. And, yes, she needs to know that it was proper that she reported it. I think if it were me, I might even congratulate her for standing up for herself, but like you say, Sylvia, I would also try to build some compassion for Mr. McTouchy since he will still be around after all is said and done."

"What about the union's demand to discipline Jolene?" Sylvia wanted to know, feeling a little irritated with how far Jim wanted to take this thing with Jolene. "Really," Sylvia thought, "she's just a kid."

"The union can stuff it on this one. In fact, no less than for us, they need to learn to support teachers when it is right to do so, and to not merely protect teachers' appropriate rights to due process when it is no longer right to support their actions. We shouldn't try to exonerate teachers by creating scapegoats out of students just because they are the path of least resistance. We need to distinguish these actions and so does the union," Jim went off on another tirade.

"As you were driving down here, the local president called me and explained that the local fully expected that this student would be disciplined, Jim. What are we going to do?" Sylvia persisted a bit irritated.

"You will tell the union that this student will definitely not be disciplined, but that from your read on the situation there appears to have been some professional misconduct and impropriety on McTouchy's part. Sylvia, you did well in reserving the right to make this decision in your discussion with Ivan and Sam when you questioned Ivan's actions. Inform Ivan, Sam, and Terry [the local president] that you will be giving them a letter to the effect that you will investigate this matter. Tell them you will require a written statement from Ivan, that you will secure one from Jolene, and that you will look into the overall rapport that Ivan has had with Jolene and her cohorts. If you conclude that the teacher engaged in conduct unbecoming a professional, note that you will be disciplining him. It is the right thing to do, Sylvia," Jim assured her. "The union will not back off now, so you need to be able to take charge again and make the decisions that you know need to be made."

"Okay, Jim. I don't like it, but I think it is what needs to be done," Sylvia reluctantly consented.

"Good. If you need any help along the way, keep in touch and let's do this thing according to the collective agreement. Read Section F18 on misconduct before you do another thing, and follow the right steps. They will try to trip you up on process. We are going to end up with a saw-off here, and it will be a letter of discipline on file, no more and no less."

As Jim left, Sylvia knew that his prediction would come true because it would be their "drop-back-and-punt position" as her dad would have called it. She would have to start with a stronger disciplinary stance. She also knew that her teachers would feel let down by her especially now that she would have to take a hard line, and that they would never trust her again in these situations. She knew that some of her colleagues would be critical, but they would see it as Jim having his hand in it more than about her, and so as not to alienate herself from them she decided that she would leave them with their own impressions. "I mean, Jim isn't that popular a leader amongst my colleagues anyway," she concluded. She also knew, though, that some of her other colleagues would actually be supportive of this decision. Sylvia felt somewhat compromised all around, but when she thought about it, she had to admit that in essence, she agreed with the plan of action, and she intended to see it through. She wasn't going to go quite as far as Jim suggested she go in exonerating her student. She decided it would be best to remind Jolene to remain careful about reading too much in to Mr. McTouchy's actions, but she would assure her student that she did the right thing in coming forward. After all, she wouldn't want her students feeling that they couldn't report serious wrong doings for fear of reprisal. But there is a fine line between this kind of reporting and frivolous reporting that "I really do have to safeguard against, otherwise my teachers will accuse me of throwing the door wide open to interference with their classroom authority," Sylvia concluded. Jim certainly does tend to go a bit too far, she thought. "He needs to get more practical," she agreed with her colleagues who have complained about him in the past.

As Jim Stone drove off, he knew that Sylvia would clean up this mess. Of all their principals, Sylvia was the most procedurally astute if not the least defensive. He was already constructing the letter of discipline in his mind, some of which would eventually end up, through his influence, in the one that Sylvia would write and place on the teacher's file. He knew the letter would need to address both the incident itself and Ivan's interpersonal relations with students in general. Jim hoped, as he sped back to the affairs of his office, that Ivan would use this incident as a critical learning experience regarding teacher/student rapport: Its purposes and its professional flavor.

He wished he could just sit and talk with this teacher; however, he knew that if the intended result wasn't achieved, he would need to move into this more disciplinary direction after all. The union would use such a discussion as a procedural error in a misconduct investigation and would make it more difficult for him to protect the student's interests. Also, he knew that Sylvia would feel that he stepped into her territory. "Actually," he corrected himself, "It is Sylvia's role to reinforce the useful learnings that arise out of this incident for both Jolene and Ivan. And furthermore, if the union hadn't been adversarial enough to be unreasonably one-sided, and if the parents hadn't laid out some of their own demands, Sylvia just might have gotten away with using Jolene as a scapegoat to satiate the teacher and the union, and I probably never would have become involved," he concluded. "She would have smugly chalked it up to a successful experience, and adopted that strategy as a defining part of her leadership over children and teachers. Why not? She was certainly mentored that way! Maybe, in some ironic, but perverse way, the union does have a role to play in professionalizing our principals," he chuckled to himself.

He was happy to drive off and return to the affairs of his office even though he knew the union president would be calling him shortly to discuss this situation and attempt to badger him into softening their planned stance. He hoped Sylvia would lay it on a bit thick so that the saw-off would seem like a good compromise to everyone concerned. As he rounded the corner to his office, he returned to wishing, "if we could really just discuss these kinds of issues as though all parties concerned shared a joint commitment to student and teacher learning and wellbeing rather than from such an adversarial position." But he also knew that power, control, and politics is as influentially significant, if not more so, over decision making as is pedagogy in educational settings today. He brought his car to a stop and sat for a while in the quiet and solitude of his vehicle before mounting the staircase to his office.

Chapter IV

Entering the Question of Pedagogical Intent

Exploring Indeterminacy in Lived-Experience

In the song *Two for the Show* by Trooper that became popular in the latter seventies (prior to the accountability urgencies that came to dominate educational discourse as this discourse took shape and became experienced at least by me as a beginning and then experienced educator in the 80's and 90's) the first verse goes (as attempted from memory):

> Two for the show, and my mother wants to go.
> It will break her heart when I tell her she's too old.
> I'm in my place; I have makeup all over my face.
> I think I know my lines, but I don't know."

This verse contains a poetic acknowledgement of both the marginalizing effects of certainty upon the individuals on which certainty is practiced, and the contradictory acknowledgement that in the lived-experience of the stage, which in literature is recognized metaphorically to represent lived-experience in general, there exists an original difficulty. This difficulty is that of coming into being, of finding expression from within an infinite range of possibilities; however, to be understood and lived as such, life also contains the essential and often lonely quality of indeterminacy: Uncertainty. Even though the persona in the above verse has apprenticed to the lines that he/she must perform, he/she is uncertain as to how those lines will come to be called forth and played out within the uncertainty of the intersection between the stage, with all its multifarious potentialities, and him/herself as actor.

In his discussion on the body as reduced to its sexual being, Merleau-Ponty (1962) refers to uncertainty in lived experience as the "principle of indeterminacy". He states, "there is in human experience a principle of indeterminacy…Existence is indeterminate in itself, by reason of its fundamental structure and in as far as it is the very process whereby the hitherto meaningless takes on meaning" (p. 169). In his second major discussion on radical hermeneutics, Caputo (2000) cautions that we must resist the temptation "to still the hermeneutic flux, to arrest the play that is set in motion once we have conceded the inescapable undecidability in things" (p. 242). He further posits that mercy, peace, and justice are merely perspectives and that "the ability of an idea to answer our complaints, to give us meaning and comfort, is little guarantee of its truth" (p. 242).

Discovery of a Surplus of Meanings:

In every heard, we must remain attuned to the unheard if we are to remain faithful to lived experience as a confluence of interpretive acts that intersect in a moment in time to give rise to meaning and significance (Gallagher, 1992; Gadamer, 1960/1989). Any attempt to take a moment of existence and name it or position it is defined in phenomenology as the phenomenological reduction—the act of reducing something to a subjectivity which at most can be understood as truth in context, with a history, a tradition and a local inflexion, its field of being. Jardine (1998) explains that "by unearthing the intentionality of experience, the reduction shows that experience is always and already an experience of something. We are already connected to the Earth, to each other, to our children, albeit in ambiguous and multi-vocal ways" (p.

22). Derrida (1972/1981) affirms that within every interpretation there exists an unheard, a deferral that in the overall schema holds as much sway as that which came into being, that which became interpreted and named. In every act of naming, there exists a not-naming. Foucault's genealogies remind the reader that one must remain sensitive to that which is not named (Rabinow, 1984; Ransom, 1997; Carrette, 2000; Foucault, 1988). Foucault cautions that the more we attempt to marginalize the abyss through the practices of certainty that arise out of an unexamined metaphysics that circumscribes our taken-for-granted and therefore unfamiliar mechanisms of power, then the more the marginalized will come into being through resistance, and thus, call itself forth (Foucault, 1977/1980; Apple, 1982). In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) cautions that naming poses as violence to that which remains unnamed, and that resistance has the tendency to return that violence in kind.

Opening Pedagogy to Uncertainty

In heeding Caputo (2000), who reminds his reader that "faith is a decision, an interpretation made in the midst of just such undecidability" (p. 242), as an educator of 22 years, I am called out of my comfort zone regarding the very meaning and significance of a cherished interpretive within my educational landscape—pedagogy itself. Hitherto being pricked out of my complacency by the ongoing conversation to which the above dialogue is an attempt to contribute, my understanding and practice of pedagogy was, and still remains, more comfortably located within the various competing epistemologies that certainty clothes. Nonetheless, upon recollecting, even within this comfortable home, there has been, and remains, a persistent noise and resistance to the practices of certainty as I apply such practice to the lived experiences of teaching and learning, teacher, student, parent, child and self: A struggle about which the Jolene narrative may contribute some interpretive value.

Revisiting Jolene's Narrative through Uncertainty

In their exercise of certainty over Jolene, all of the characters—Sylvia, Jim, Sam, Rachel and her mom—must have collectively alienated Jolene from any real sense of ownership, authenticity, and authorship over her own understanding and interpretation of her distressing experience. To be alienated from self must have been a confusing and lonely experience for Jolene. She was not even afforded the opportunity to relate her story to her perpetrator, Mr. Mc Touchy. Instead, it was related for her by Sylvia who appears to have become alienated from her own experiences of the certainties that a chauvinistic work world must have perpetrated on her. Syliva failed to empathize with Jolene's potential wounding by the projective nature of the undisclosed discourses of power, control, and intrusion, not to mention the discourses of sexual and gender dominance. It appears that Sylvia has come to personify the very trappings of certainty that some of these discourses require, and if not because she believes in these trappings, then simply to appease teachers whose "trust" she appears to desire more than she does a consistent, ethical custodialship over her students. This issue of trust is one that frequently arises in conflict situations with teachers and students. Teachers and principals will often use this word as a procedure of power over their supervisors as a term that comes to mean, "I am both the adult, and the professional with expert understanding and commitment. Therefore, the decisions I make are the right ones. Your job is to support my decisions, not to question them." Much current educational literature on change and leadership discusses trust building and supporting as defining features of successful leaders (Deal 1999, Hargreaves 1994, and Fullan 2001). Teachers are in touch with this literature; they often use this term to try to limit the responses that leaders have in situations such as the one in which Sylvia finds herself. There is a real need to deconstruct the term "trust" as it arises out of certain paradigms of hierarchical authority structures such as expert, adult, and professional; unfortunately, it has come to be a defining feature in supervisory-subordinate relationships that disrupts the supervisory role. It is quite possible that the literature needs to look more closely at the way in which trust itself has become a procedure of power that impedes pedagogical responsiveness because it empowers authority over and above critique, ethics, and responsibility as it appears to have done in Sylvia's case as she struggles to respond pedagogically to Jolene's experience.

Partly as a consequence of Sylvia's struggle, and, too, in an unavoidable way, Jolene wrestled with the above explicated principle of indeterminacy. She became debilitated by self-doubting as the narrative unfolded; however, where was the pedagogy that may have assisted her in this wrestling to use this experience as an instructive event rather than having to experience it as a debilitating psychological trauma? This commitment to pedagogy is what Jim was attempting to offer in his approach to dealing with Jolene's needs. Her need to understand that she was not at fault to come to the office and explore this event with her principal; that her principal felt many contradictory pressures in dealing with this event; and that Jolene had her experience, her understanding of it, and that she had a right to that understanding. This is the pedagogy that I think Jim was attempting to enable. But did he go too far as Sylvia would have one believe? I wonder what resonant cord this question strikes for the reader of this study.

In reading this narrative, a colleague of mine cautioned me, "We have to remember that McTouchy has his story to tell," but she also noted that Sylvia's actions were disappointing given that "this principal knew that Jolene was not making it up." My colleague went on to ellaborate that:

> The point to remember is the answers are not as important as the questions we ask ourselves. Each situation is unique when dealing with complex human interactions. This is why we have to complete an unbiased investigation to make decisions based on what we believe is morally correct. (K. Nelson, personal communication, August 18, 2003)

This narrative assists me in understanding that there exists a certainty/uncertainty or indeterminacy dialectic that comes into play during conflict resolution. Unfortunately, it appears that overall, the characters lost sight of the hermeneutic possibilities that exist within this dialectic, and consequently the possibility for empathy and pedagogical responsiveness became eroded. Each character aligned with one or other of the polarities within this dialectic, bifurcating one from the other.

Jolene could benefit from enough certainty to author her own perspective on her experience: To share it and take responsibility for it. And what about Ivan? It's difficult to know what to think about Ivan. There is a social tendency to vilify those who cross certain boundaries, so it would be very difficult for Ivan to honestly share either the indeterminacy or the certainty that existed in his knowledge of his own actions. Ivan borrowed a discourse of certainty from the authority that adulthood and professionalism bestowed upon him. Sylvia and Sam assisted him in this pursuit: Jim resisted.

I am left to wonder, what would have been the outcome had Sylvia and Sam Travesty, the union representative, embraced the principal of indeterminacy? Would they have been able to question their own sense of identities around power, control, child, teacher, authority, and professionalism, words that seem to discursively direct their responses? Is it probable that Jolene, Rachel, Sylvia, Ivan, and Sam might have resolved this issue without Jim's intervention? Could acknowledgements, apologies, forgiveness, and learning have been the outcome rather than conflict, blame, and continued hurt? And would that have been appropriate?

And what about Jim? The questions I have about Jim (who from an ethical perspective is, I think, representative of the way I practice my leadership) are: "Could he have engaged some indeterminacy regarding Jolene's account?" "Was he listening through his own voice or was he hearing Jolene?" "Was he hearing Jolene's story as fact or as an interpretive of experience to which the task of discernment needed to be applied?" Given that hearing occurs within a subjective context, did Jim "sell Ivan out" as alluded to by Sylvia or was he listening to Jolene in a way that others were not? What would have been the outcome had he shifted his stance? Was Jim's reaction based upon some pre-conceived notion of childhood victimization or was his reaction a valid response to an unbalanced and inappropriate application of the discourses of authority, control, and adultism? In thinking about these questions, I feel the need to caution that from my experience, in schools we tend to smooth over issues related to teacher incompetence, malpractice, and misconduct. Mills (2001) notes "teachers are sometimes the perpetrators of sexual harassment…There is evidence which supports this assertion that girls and women are often also the recipients of unwanted, harassing and/or violent treatment at the hands of some male staff" (p. 5).

In my work as an educational leader I have found that as a principal I had more flexibility in dealing with these matters than I seem to have as a superintendent. As a superintendent one must work within the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that the principal possesses in dealing with these matters. With a principal like Sylvia, could Jim have turned an attempt at mediation over to Sylvia rather than have her investigate? He could have, but would it have been appropriate, and would Jolene have been nurtured through this experience? With this approach, would more good will have been the result? Would the same learnings have occurred with less tension and stress for all? Could Jim have spoken candidly with the teacher after all? Could he have successfully mediated a meeting between Jolene, Rachel, Mr. Mc Touchy, Sam, and Sylvia?

There are some significant risks with this approach. To mediate precludes discipline. One cannot offer mediation and then discipline if the mediation does not work. Would there have been sufficient safeguards for students regarding Ivan with a mediated approach? To turn this mediation over to Sylvia, Jim would have been taking a certain risk for Jolene. By directing the outcome, he attempted to secure a certain environment of protection for her: But did it work? Sylvia had her own ideas as to how these events were going to unfold once Jim left the building again. How much pedagogical intent was attained in either scenario?

Educational leadership appears to be about risk taking, compromising, directing, and empowering: "Finding the balance," I have heard it coined; yet, I am want to ask, "What does balance mean and where is it located? From family systems therapy, there has emerged an understanding that if balance does not exist in the individuals, there may be a balance that creates a harmony, even through the din and clatter of conflict and tension, which exists in the overall family system. The tug and tension that ensues is representative of the need to restore an overall balance when one or other family member is out-of-kilter with the harmony that exists in the family system. The conflict or tension that ensues never results in an exact replication of the original harmony. Rather, relationships exist through an altered dynamic that reflects a reinvented harmony.

A hermeneutic interpretation suggests that this type of family systems theory can be useful in coming to understand the narrative about Jolene through a fresh lens. The relationship between Jolene and Sylvia will never be colored with the same brush following this conflict situation; neither will Sylvia's and Ivan's or Sylvia's and Jim's, for instance. Rather, these characters will interact through a new dynamic that emphasizes certain ways of being oriented towards the various discourses of pedagogy, power, professionalism, expertise, curriculum, and childhood that this conflict returned to the field of play. As such, the role that conflict and tension play in reestablishing this new dynamic may be instructive and pedagogical.

In my roles as an educational leader, I have long struggled with a desire to be tension and conflict free, understanding this as one goal of educational governance. This desire for fewer struggles in educational leadership has influenced my decision to engage in this study. As I have gone through this dissertation research, however, I have come to question that desire. It could be possible, that to have wisdom emerge in any set of relationships with a variety of individuals is a leadership goal that is fraught with tension, conflict, refusal, and risk taking. It just may be that going after the heart of what we are about in education as we watch over children's lives and their potential growth and development is too much the flux of what educational leadership is intended to be about: An originating difficulty that cannot be stilled (Caputo, 2000). Yet, that call for balance continues to create tension and unease in my own leadership practice so I continue in this pursuit for understanding.

Each leader is left to read the situation of the moment taking into account the individuals, their attitudes and skills. Each situation calls for a unique response, but the focus must remain on pedagogy. And to whom is pedagogy directed towards in these situations? We are all learners in every situation, so pedagogy is not something we merely orient towards children; rather, it is a way of being oriented towards learning as well, no doubt, but I would think that our main interest must remain students.

In pleading for leniency for teachers, some principals say, "These things take time. Teachers need opportunities to learn as well." This justification seems reasonable, but there is a point at which one expects a teacher to be pedagogically attuned to the needs of children in given situations. There exists an overall expectation of competence in teaching related to pedagogy that each situation challenges no doubt, but that must also sound a resonant chord with the participants: The students, parents, teachers and administrators alike. The challenge is to find the common ground in these matters. To discover that resonant chord that says, "Ah, this was a competent act; this was a competent decision; this was a competent response" is the indeterminate work of leadership in conflict resolution. Glatthorn and Jailall (2000) call such space the zone of acceptability. It may be that this zone of acceptability is what is meant when it is said, "finding the balance". Is that what leadership is about? Operating within zones of acceptability, finding the balance? There is something unsettling about this interpretive. Are there times that it may be counter-pedagogical to merely strike a balance?

A Genealogical View Of Pedagogy

For the intent and purpose of locating the research questions there is no need to review a long history of pedagogy as it became understood and practiced through recent time until the present. Nonetheless, this study draws heavily on an understanding of pedagogy as a gestalt that enables pedagogical responsiveness. Van Manen (1991) talks about pedagogy as a "theory and practice of living with children" and of standing "in a relationship of thoughtfulness and openness to children and young people rather than being governed by traditional beliefs, discarded values, old rules, and fixed impositions" (p. 3). In his discussion entitled *The Hermeneutic Imagination and the Pedagogic Text*, Smith (1999) opens with a question about how we might

> orient our lives with children when we can no longer take for granted what a child is in any discrete sense, when we make problematic all of the usual categories for understanding children in our culture…or when we take up the question of the meaning of children as one which is not answerable except self-reflexively, that is from the question of who I am in-relation-to my children. (p. 28)

Britzman (1991) talks about pedagogy as a process in which the relationships between teachers and students "are better expressed as dialogic, in that they are shaped as they shape each other in the process of coming to know…these dialogic relations determine the very texture of teaching and the possibility it holds" (pp. 3-4). In his discussion about teaching children in poverty, Haberman (1995) positions pedagogy (although he does not name it as such) as a general deconstruction of the self: The act of coming to terms with the beliefs and prejudices that frame a teacher's actions and orientation towards children, teaching, and learning (p. 91). This knowing the self empowers one to be responsive to children, their lives, and to make possible these lives within the teaching and learning context.

This understanding of pedagogy lends some legitimacy to Jim's approach to placing some expectation on Sylvia in the Jolene Narrative. Sylvia let Jolene down pedagogically. She did not use this situation as a critique of herself so that she could become discerning and critical of the discourses that were informing her decision-making. She failed to recognize and capitalize upon the teachable moment in this situation, and she lost sight of the possibilities this experience held for Jolene as the primary learner. Jim did not. He laid out an expectation of being oriented towards

Jolene and her learning needs in the given situation. Still, some of the power structures, such as collective agreements and the grievance process, within which he feels pressured to operate, may have structured his response such that his ability to fully realize this goal was frustrated, as Sylvia indicated would occur. Sylvia's notion that Jolene "is just a kid" indicates a discourse of child that does not qualify Jolene to be fully exposed to a discovery of what happened or didn't to her in the same way that it does not privilege her account with the same credibility as the discourse of adult does for Mr. McTouchy's account of the situation. Rather, Jolene would be granted a controlled, filtered version that Sylvia felt was appropriate to share: But what discourses make it appropriate? For instance, how do the discourses of respect, order and control, adult and child that require students to be obedient to the will and intent of teachers color Sylvia's version of this event? The opportunity for educational leadership, of course, is that these discourses are never linguistically unified. The polysemic nature of the words that make up the discourses in teaching and learning can be explored to surface subjectivities around the defining features of these discourses (Ricoeur 1973, p. 113). For instance, respect can be understood as deference to adult authority, but it can also mean the mutual observances shared between adult and student in the form of rapport or of getting along in mutually beneficial ways that enable the schooling intent and that hold both parties mutually accountable for its adequate formation. From a discourse of rapport as opposed to one of respect, how does Ivan fair in relationship to a responsible practice of pedagogy?

Within this ongoing conversation about pedagogy, which I intend not simply to reiterate but to which I hope to contribute, there already exists a genealogical view of pedagogy from the technical-rational discussions of curriculum by Tyler (1949), Taba (1962), and Tanner & Tanner (1980) to its reconceptualization described by Pinar (1975 & 1988) as consisting of various curriculum tendencies: Its positioning in critical theory by Giroux (1981), Giroux & McLaren (1989), Cuban (1984), Gore (1993), Poster (1989), and Slee (1993 & 1995); its location in phenomenology by van Manen (1991, 1997 & 2002) and Jardine (1992 & 1998) ; its location in hermeneutics by Smith (1999) and Gallagher (1992); and its postmodern deconstruction as discussed by Lyotard (1979/1984), Blades (1997), Britzman (1991), and Slattery (1995).

Nonetheless, what is of significance to my current discussion is Apple and Beyer's (1998) concern regarding

> The transformation of curriculum theory and practice from a concern with what should be taught and why we should teach it to problems associated with how to organize, build, and above all now, evaluate curriculum and teaching… Professional curriculum debate now tends to be over procedures, not over what counts as legitimate knowledge. (p. 3)

This impulse to remove interpretation from the pedagogical discourse by reducing curriculum to mere content and methodology (it is actually so pervasive that it functions as a modern gestalt, circumscribing pedagogy as it becomes practiced in schools by many teachers and principals) is discussed by Gallagher (1992), in his reflections on Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, as the reduction of pedagogy to mere methodology. Britzman (1991) cautions that this modern impulse limits pedagogy "to a mechanical problem of transmission" (p. 37). However, Gallagher adds that this reduction is in reality never complete, even though in the pedagogical practices that arise out of conservative and critical educational theory there is a false guarantee regarding the certainty of reproduction. It is this inability to completely reduce pedagogy, coupled with an erroneous belief and confidence in the pedagogical reduction that is of interest to me, and that calls forth a question. A failure to recognize what Foucault (1977/1980) would call agency as it resides in the teacher, the local educational landscape, and the student is a failure to reckon with the way in which pedagogy can be unwittingly reduced to a procedure of power that legitimizes some forms of knowledge or action while marginalizing others; and, as a procedure of power, pedagogy performs this marginalization covertly, such that pedagogy as it is practiced and experienced by the student assumes an insidious quality. For instance, a failure to recognize that a student's course of study is more than neutral in its political, social, and psychological effects is a failure to recognize the traditions and the discourses that privilege the knowledge forms which that curriculum contains. A failure to recognize that "a teacher's delivery of that curriculum" is more than neutral, that the teaching act itself is an interpretation that changes "the curriculum in its pure form" as it is being "transmitted" by the teacher or as it is being "received" by the student is a failure to recognize the transforming power of teaching and learning and the agency contained therein. It is this blind spot that concerns me most.[3] I believe that practicing within this blind spot and calling it curriculum or pedagogy, actually serves to cripple pedagogy when pedagogical responsiveness is most needed.

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[3] In a paper presented to the Western Canadian Conference on Student Teaching entitled *The Impossibility of Pushing the Bus on Which You are Riding: The Limits of Reflective Practice*, Carson (2002) observes that "unconsciously consenting to certain discourses has informed orientations to teaching" (p. 6). He offers hope, though, that "by relinquishing ownership over subjectivity and language we become more attentive to the ways that language works to structure identity" (p 6.) and that in so doing, we can begin to recognize these once unfamiliar, taken-for-granted discourses that permeate our teaching practices.

This interpretation brings me back to Jolene and Sylvia. Does Sylvia recognize the potential marginalizing effects that her need to control the information that Jolene receives around her experience of being victimized might have on Jolene? Is she capable of caring from this pedagogic lens or is she so lost in the discourses of power, method, and control that permeate the curriculum discourse as I have seen it practiced that she has become incapable of exercising the agency that she brings to her significant role as principal of a senior high school: The agency to make learning paramount over and above other discourses? I suspect that Sylvia must feel caught up in the power and control, teacher autonomy and expertise suppositions, and that either she feels their constraints as I do or that she identifies too closely with these discourses. Nonetheless, is she willing to focus her decision-making on the potential learning outcomes that emerge in a given situation as those outcomes unfold through dialogue with students, teachers, and parents? Or will she need to hold fast to the proven discourses that she learned well on her journey to becoming a school administrator? If so, it is unfortunate, because I would deem the work of leadership in these situations to be about knowing when and how to take risks in order to remain oriented towards children and their wellbeing, and to be able to frame one's actions as such, such that those actions become instructive to others. "Aha," this has just hit for me a resonant chord: "Become instructive to others". I really question just how instructive to others are Jim's, and by virtue of authorship over these narratives, my, actions. In the presence of the resistances and resentments to which Sylvia alludes and with which she also lives, can Jim's actions be instructive?

Once again, my colleague (K, Nelson, personal communication, August 18, 2003) comments, “The way I see it, Sylvia is most concerned with power, the union, and maintaining a rapport with her staff and the ‘old boys’ club’ with which she has to work.” Nonetheless, she goes on to ask, “How do you think Sylvia will respond to a similar, future situation? I think she did learn something; another principal may not have, but she seems reflective.”

Locating Pedagogy in Attunement to the Other

Michelfelder’s (1989) discussion on *Derrida and the Ethics of the Ear* is relevant to the question, “What is pedagogy and where is it located?” Michelfelder discusses the ethics of being attuned to the other. She questions, “What happens to ethics, if one cannot stand in for [others] and do them justice by speaking for them?” (p. 49) Pedagogy can be thought of as being the “‘art of grasping what the other has really wanted to say’ so that one could make a stronger defense of the other than the other is capable of doing” (p. 51). It is my experience that by and large, although called into question, this notion of speaking on another’s behalf is where an understanding of pedagogy has become arrested for many of us within educational practice. We speak for students, for students’ own good, when students fail to speak as such for themselves. We grade them, we pass predetermined knowledges on to them, we discipline them, and we protect them for their own good as we understand that good to be. I have concern in this speaking for the other as a certainty, and professionalizing such an act by naming it pedagogy, especially when such speaking becomes bifurcated from tentativeness: From what I am coming to understand as uncertainty. Michelfelder further suggests "if we have any interest in listening to someone speak so that we can hear precisely their silence, what they are not saying, we naturally have to keep our ears open" (p. 51). She repeats the caution that all speaking for someone else, as with reading, actually "exceeds the reproduction of meaning in recreating it" (p. 51). To say that we are speaking pedagogically for someone on their own behalf is not necessarily free of our need to speak as well for ourselves, and if we become unattuned to the other even as we speak for this other, do we not run into the danger of speaking too freely for ourselves in the other's name?

In current, theoretical pedagogical discourse there are beautifully articulated and well-intended ways of defining this speaking for the other as pedagogical knowing. Van Manen (1991) discusses pedagogy as standing in *loco parentis* for the child. The teacher is responsible to teach the young; but, as such, van Manen cautions that when we speak on behalf of the child, since pedagogical action is normative, it must also be situational, relational, and self-reflective (p. 15). He notes that although the pedagogical intent is concerned with speaking for the child, for what is good for the child, it is possible to violate this intent because "it is hard sometimes to distinguish between pedagogical intent and motives which are somehow tangled up in our own being: our personal life histories, our frustrations, victories, secret wishes, ambitions, fears, insecurities, desires, hopes" (p. 22).

In his discussion on giftedness, Smith (1999) describes the act of finding one's giftedness as finding that which makes that person unique (p. 144). He states that:

> For a true pedagogy of giftedness, a pedagogy which is guided by careful discernment, discernment which is attentive to small signs of big things...this

> requires tremendous maturity, which implies the authentic freedom on our part to watch over children in a way that is faithful to the full possibilities which are at work in children's lives. (p. 145)

Smith, van Manen, and Michelfelder discuss the difficulty and tentativeness that this speaking for others might entail. From my experience, I see a lot of speaking on behalf of children that is squarely located in the techniques empowered by certainty and less by a pedagogy of tentativeness. In discussing Nietzsche's concept of inverse crippling, Smith challenges us to remain sensitive to this concept and to locate it within pedagogical practice since, as he states:

> Every culture is inversely crippled in its own way, and children will go through life crippled to the degree that the significant adults in their lives have not understood their own crippledness, that is, their inevitable constraint within limits of knowledge and materiality. To find one's gift means to be found, but being found also depends upon another who is searching in the right way and in the right places. (p. 145)

In the narrative regarding Jolene, who was listening with discernment for her? At first I thought Jim was, but now that I review this narrative, I don't think anyone really was. Jim was asking Sylvia to retrace her steps and engage more pedagogically with Jolene, but he was operating from some predetermined notions as to what Jolene needed to hear in this situation. Sylvia may be well advised to forget about deciding what Jolene needs to hear and to simply ask her what it felt like to fully disclose her story to Sylvia given Sylvia's dictatorial attempt at controlling the outcome by trying to control Jolene's willingness and need to be heard fully, if at all. To really hear and discern, one first must listen. Jolene needs to be given an opportunity to talk about what it felt like to have Ivan touch her, sit in such proximity to her, and invade her space as she experienced it: What it felt like to disclose that story in her school first to Rachel who disclosed it to her mother, and then to her principal. I wonder how Jolene would respond if Sylvia let her bring her friend Rachel back into the room to revisit the whole experience from beginning to end, with Sylvia off the defensive and open to critique? Would this approach undermine Sylvia's authority as a principal? Would it enhance her legitimacy as a pedagogue? Or has Sylvia become so attuned to speaking for children on their behalf that she knows exactly what needs to be said for children, for their own good, better than they know for themselves in these situations? Many educators feel they do.

Would it undermine Ivan for Jolene to know that just maybe he crossed the line, that he was remorseful, and now schooled in appropriate student/teacher rapport? I don't think it would. I think that it would empower the adults to stand in a relationship of openness, accountability, and humanness with their students. If Sylvia would say, "You know what, Jolene? When you came into my office the other day, I crossed the line. I invalidated your feelings and interpretation about what happened to you, and I let you down by trying too hard to control the situation instead of dealing with what really might have happened here," I think that she would open Jolene up to a rich dialogue based on mutual respect and trust, and even problem solving and forgiveness. Students would continue to respect a legitimate, capable exercise of Sylvia and her teachers' subject knowledge and custodial care over them. The tenure and nature of the relationships would change, but pedagogy may become center stage, and other presently more prevalent discourses would be de-centered. Sure, new struggles and tensions would emerge, but would they destroy schooling and produce indulgent, unruly students? I don't think so.

This scenario is only offered as a possibility for pedagogical action. It resembles an attempt to utilize events, conflicts, and situations as teachable moments that build shared understandings of the roles and responsibilities that students, teachers, principals and superintendents fulfill as they struggle to remain pedagogical in given situations. This scenario represents what I think an orientation towards the wellbeing of children might resemble in this particular situation; nonetheless, a large number of educational leaders I have encountered do not, so it leaves me with some doubt as to my reasonableness in these matters. Most principals still prefer more exercise of authority, expert knowledge, directing, telling, and controlling than dialoguing. Therefore, I tread somewhat cautiously.

Crisis in Understanding Pedagogical Intent

In participating in this current dialogue and narrative analysis, in listening to principals and my colleagues, and even in the call by the above three scholars, I can hear the lure, and have witnessed the tenacity of this lure to locate pedagogy within practices of certainty, of searching in the right way and in the right places, and of standing in *loco parentis* with tact. The caution of inverse crippling can be missed in the enthusiasm and the certainty of hearing the other in the right way and in the right places. Consequently, I am not so comfortable with locating pedagogy in certainty. This crisis in understanding called me to a reexamination of pedagogy itself. I have been called back to the very heart of my practice as an experienced educator, called to temporarily dislocate pedagogy, to throw it back into play so that I may call it forth again, anew within the lived experience of my office as superintendent of a school system and of teachers, principals and children.

Chapter V

Locating Inquiry in Autobiographical Narrative

A Call to Inquiry (1)

From where does this call to inquiry arise? Although I have struggled, I have been unable to clearly put my pen to this calling forth to name the questions that I am being asked to examine.[4] The questions that I am being called to are in the neighborhood of a familiarity that has been born out of some conscious and unconscious melding of my ongoing studies and readings in the fields of philosophy and educational practice as teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. But also, this call to reexamine arises out of some recollection of my own experience as a student, as alluded to in the earlier discussion on the ethic that I believe informs my leadership.[5]

Throughout this study, then, questions are interspersed. They remain in the neighbourhood of the originating question that informs this study: How does one remain faithful to pedagogical intent during conflict resolution? But rather than attempt to artificially discern the full array of questions to which this study becomes the tentatively held answer, the research questions continue to unfold as this study unfolds. In fact, some questions may only emerge as this research is concluded because only then will the full text of the study in its present form become available to the questions for which it tentatively stands as answers: A process of continuous unfolding as understood in its hermeneutic sense (Smith, 2002).

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[4] In terms of the uncertainty of the question, Carson (2002) notes that although lived-experiences and past experiences "make their own unique demands", which I am positioning here as a call to question, he also clarifies that these "demands and the outcome are never certain" (p. 2).

[5] Jardine (1998) discusses how we are called to understanding when we become struck by something such that it addresses us. He discusses the grounding of inquiry in "something vaguely familiar, vaguely recognizable, something that bears a "family resemblance" that warrants further investigation" (p. 41).

In searching for further relevant questions, I wish to relate another composite narrative that, at present, seems representative of what it is over which I am struggling to be able to ask regarding pedagogical intent during conflict resolution. I know that the question or set of questions is about the possibility of locating pedagogy in uncertainty. Even so, I do not yet feel at home in this asking. I remain merely within the neighborhood. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) offer assurance that when taken-for-granted frameworks begin to "give way to question, doubt and uncertainty, a fair amount of travel in attractive blind alleys is to be expected" (p. 24). In keeping with this sense of journeying, narrative seems to be an appropriate way to discover the way I engage in leadership.

The relevance of the story to the social sciences is well documented. Clandinin and Connelly note, "education and educational studies are a form of experience…[and that]…narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience" (p. 18). Max van Manen (2002), talks about narrative as a form of phenomenological practice. He observes:

> There is no denying that this phenomenology of everyday life is a deepening experience for those who practice it. And phenomenological inquiry has formative consequences for professional practitioners by increasing their perceptiveness and tactfulness. (pp. 7-8)

It is from a rupturing within my experience as an educator that this call to inquiry originates. As such, this study has been located within a recollection of lived experiences. I have been a principal in three schools over seven years, an assistant superintendent for three years, and only recently, a superintendent for the last two years. In these twelve years as an educational leader, I have felt the most stress over the great rupture that re-occurs between district teachers and administrators, and me when we deal with student/teacher and parent/school conflicts. My leadership practice has been situated within four locations throughout Alberta, and now in British Columbia. In each location, I have experienced a profound expectation by teaching and administrative staffs to support their decisions (understood to mean side with them) during moments of crisis (usually centered on student misbehavior or poor performance) between themselves and their students and families. Many times, I have supported school and district staffs' decisions by advocating for them: Often times because I have felt comfortable with those decisions, but sometime, and with some regularity, I have supported decisions I felt were somewhat suspect because I felt pressured by staff expectation to so do. Yet at other times, I have reluctantly supported staff decisions and reinforced staffs' needs in discussions with the various parties involved in a conflict because I have sensed greater maturity on the part of the student and the parent than I have witnessed in discussion with the staff member concerned. In short, at times I have supported decisions that I felt compromised the pedagogical intent being called forth by the presenting situation or the particular child.

Nonetheless, repeatedly, I have witnessed resentment and stubbornness when I have called a teacher or principal's decisions into question: An accusing, "How dare you question my practice? I am the teacher, you know!" It is my experience that it is very difficult for teachers and principals to look upon student misbehavior as an opportunity to critically reflect upon their own practice. Berry (1995) suggests that "misbehavior has the structure of a question; not to be spared the students, but to emerge as possible insight into world and self" (p. 94). Sadly, more often than not, this question takes the form of a debate or argument by the time the problem reaches my office. Berry suggests that the question that misbehavior poses can actually assume the form of a conversation about the student, the classroom, and the teacher.

I have experienced that by the time a problem reaches my desk, students and parents are much more willing and capable of entering into this conversation than are teachers and principals. I am called to ask, "Why?" Why on matters of deep pedagogical responding do teachers and principals become defensive and closed with students and parents, and with myself as an educational leader? This question represents a nagging concern that has most haunted me as an educator. I have understood the need for some creative tension among professionals in order for advocacy to exist: This tension is apparent within educational discourse as well as within educational practice. Yet, in these moments of heightened conflict, I struggle to hold on to the important principles of respect and dignity for all individuals—students, teachers, parents and principals alike—and to still maintain harmonious working relationships. I find that too often in advocating for students, the harmony breaks down, and the necessary creative tension heightens into stress, argument, blame, and resentment.

If any area of working with teachers and principals presents itsef as a great concern in my leadership, it is this placing of pedagogy into play, of making the familiar, unfamiliar so that it can be examined and rendered not only meaningful, but significant, and relevant within the presenting context that calls pedagogy forth. Carson (2002) speaks metaphorically about this concern as "The Impossibility of Pushing the Bus on Which You Are Riding: The Limits of Reflective Practice".

By way of illustration, and to further locate this inquiry, the following composite narrative represents those conflict events in schooling that place student interiorities and struggles for relevance at odds with the normalizing discourses of power, control, adult, and child, and with the curricular traditions of school organization. The question of pedagogical intent returns this study to occasions such as the one described below so that they can be reopened as possibilities for revealing a meaningful relationship between pedagogical intent and educational leadership.

The following narrative represents a composite of many experiences with conflict resolution involving misbehaving boys, their over indulgent parents, and their defensive teachers. As such, and as previously mentioned, none of the incidents and characters are actual; rather, they are representative of the numerous situations that forestructure this composite. Although the school may be right in its assertion that Robert was a consistent challenge, this composite represents those cases that also seemed to involve, weak, unaccountable, resentful teaching that appears to be complicit in student "misbehaviour".

Robert's Wounding

Robert is a seventeen-year-old grade eleven student. If you meet him on the street, on the job in the local grocery or in the hallways of the school, he presents as somewhat affable, gregarious, mischievous, and as respectful as modern youth tend to be. In the more formal setting of the classroom, Robert is a handful. He lacks focus, is minimally motivated by the intended activities, he over questions his teachers' knowledge, for some, in somewhat demanding ways, and he is keenly attuned and sensitive to their treatment of him and to their use of their authority over him. Robert minimally passes many of his courses, and although he struggles to get along with some of his teachers, with others, he gets on quite well.

Robert comes from a successful business class family. His parents have a chip on their shoulders over what they perceive to be the school's trans-generational vendetta against their family, and now against Robert. His parents profess a desire to have Robert do well in school and they fight for him when they think he has been hard done by. They sometimes threaten legal suit if things aren't resolved. "They've been known to bully to get their way," as observed by his school principal.

When Robert and his mother arrived at Superintendent Walters' office, they were furious and indignant. Judy, Robert's mother, is an active parent advisory council member, taking part in numerous fundraising and planning activities to assist the school in improving its offerings to students.

Upon settling in so they could begin to share the concerns that precipitated their visit, Judy listed a litany of complaints against the school, ranging from the teachers who are marking her son unfairly, to "they are riding him for every little thing he does!" Robert appeared somewhat distressed. Robert pulled out some work that he had completed and showed Mr. Walters his marks. Mr. Walters, having taken many workshops on assessment, noticed that there was little explanation for the marks, and that most of the assignments were missing even a scoring guide for the student to go by. Some merely had a few words circled for spelling and a percentage on them. He felt that he really couldn't comment on the mark received, because he didn't have enough information. He noticed that Robert struggles with writing, but when he skimmed a few assignments he saw some very good ideas that seemed reasonably thought out, but not well developed.

So he asked, "Robert, why do you think you deserve higher marks on these assignments?"

"Well, I worked real hard on them. I don't usually work this hard, especially on this one (he pulled out one on product pricing), and I got the same low marks I always get. Also, I saw Theresa's assignment. She's a teacher's pet, and she always gets good marks no matter what she hands in to Mr. Barkstorm, but this assignment here on how prices are set, she doesn't even have the right information in it. She just threw it together and didn't even try because she said she didn't understand it. I worked hard on it because my Dad and I talked lots about this topic. He's in business, you know, and he knows a lot about price setting. He explained it to me better than Mr. Barkstorm did. All he does is hand us boring readings, and we don't even really discuss them. He sits at his desk most of the time doing nothing. He hands out sheets almost every day and goes, "here, read this and shut up." First thing Mr. Barkstorm said when I handed my assignment in was, 'so who did this for you?' He always makes insults at some of us he doesn't like. Yea, my Dad helped me but he didn't do it, I did.

Superintendent Walters responded, "Well, Robert, you do have some good thoughts down here. You seemed to have learned a lot about price setting. Your writing is quite weak, isn't it, though?"

"Well, yeah, he's always struggled with writing," Judy interjected.

Terry Walters thought that if he had been marking this kid's assignment, since it wasn't a writing or English class, he would have given Robert a better mark, but he really didn't want to go there, because questioning a teacher's marking can be quite difficult, especially where teacher autonomy plays such a significant role even in matters of assessment. Although performance standards or scoring guides have been developed, they can not be forced on teachers. But teachers are expected to help students understand how they are assessed. He felt the district had a lot of work to do in building a culture of accountability around assessment practice. He also recalled how Mr. Barkstorm is a formidable character with a strong union presence, so Terry cleared his throat and said,

"Well, Robert, if I were marking this paper, but I'm not, I would be impressed with your ideas. But would I give you a higher mark? I'm not sure. Although there are some good ideas in this writing, but remember I don't know what line of argument this assignment called for, I would tell you to work harder on your actual writing: Your spelling, punctuation, the way your sentences flow and how your ideas are put together so that your thoughts can be better communicated. Your writing is awkward, and it gets difficult to understand what you are trying to say at times."

"You should talk to Mr. Barkstorm though and ask him what he was looking for and how you could improve your mark next time. You do have a right to know this, and you can ask for it. Point out what you were trying to say in your paper and maybe he will even reconsider this mark. Have him explain why he gave you this mark, what it is based on: How much for ideas, how much for expanding on those ideas, how much for the quality of writing. Did he ask for examples? I don't see any examples here. Without knowing what the requirements of the assignment were, Robert, I can't really help you. But go back and work this out with Mr. Barkstorm.

Robert and Judy felt a little defeated. They knew that they weren't going to get very far with Mr. Walters on this point. Terry felt somewhat cheapened by his response. The words of this university professor, David Smith (2002), rang resonant for him. He recalled his professor's caution that "trying to have a meaningful human relationship with an 'expert' can often be a very frustrating experience, because the feeling arises that the person isn't really seeing or hearing you as you understand yourself to be" (p. 188). He could see that Judy and Robert certainly were experiencing this feeling right now, with him, the expert.

Still, he knew it was the expected thing to say, but in fairness, he also felt that he would have given Robert a passing grade on this assignment for his effort and for his ideas. This young man really felt he did something here. Terry also could see, though, that Robert did not work hard enough throughout his schooling years, and now he lacks the necessary background to do very well. "Happens lots with kids whose parents just don't get it," he concluded in a private thought.

Feeling deflated, Judy and Robert returned to their next complaint. They explained how the teachers, one in particular, Mr. Barkstorm, again, is rude and disrespectful towards Robert and other students on a regular basis. They claimed that this teacher was simply looking for things over which to hassle Robert.

By way of conversing, Superintendent Walters walked through some of the details of the concerns, this time with Robert relating his story. He reiterated his mother's narrative. When they felt satisfied in fully naming their concern, they began to explore. First he assured both of them that "we definitely expect all of our teachers to respect our students", and in giving this assurance, he sensed the great relief and gratitude in being heard that both mother and son felt. They let out what could be termed a collective sigh, and then he went to work.

In furthering the conversation, he asked them if they tried to work their problems out with the teacher. Robert assured him he had addressed the teacher about his concerns, and that he was merely further insulted. In asking some questions, Terry commented that he was not taking sides, but that he wanted to get a clear picture of how they got themselves into this relationship with the school. He knew the answer, because he has seen it before. Kid is spoiled, mom and dad are people of influence or are very astute and articulate and they use their influence or skill to battle with the school on their kid's behalf. The school gets mad, teachers feel they aren't supported in making the kid more accountable, and they find sundry other ways wittingly or not to prove their case and the kid pays the price anyway. What really stuck in Terry's craw about it all was that he had been around too much. He knew from his own teaching experiences and from being a principal that it takes a certain kind of teacher to destroy this kid, and conversely, a certain kind of teaching to turn things around for this boy: He's been both, he reflected. He recalled from this own teaching experiences that if you are incompetent or weak, lack the knowledge, planning or skill regarding your subject, defensive, insecure, inflexible or too power and control oriented, "all of which I have been from time to time," he confessed to himself, "then either you and this kid or as in this case, just this kid, is dead in the water," Conversely, if you can be somewhat flexible, honest and a bit accountable to the kid about your own doings because he is going to be noticing them himself anyway, if you work some on this kid's behalf and have fun with him a bit, then it's not that hard to create some win/win or at least some give and take.

Terry also had to concede, though, that both scenarios had to be occurring in that school because Robert got on well with some of his teachers even to this day, and for the past 11 years so some if not all of these teachers have had it right to varying degrees. "Really," he thought to himself, "if your parents had been less influential, less articulate, and less interfering, you either would have been straightened up long ago or you would have been out of school by now. You have had a protracted struggle with your school, and it with you," he reflected as he observed Robert's level of frustration.

In fact, just the other day he dealt with a related case where the kid and the school were locked in conflict. The principal is one of the well respected principals in the system, the teacher as well, and they both use this recognition as a trump card to get their way. They bully a bit, they act arrogant, and they take very little responsibility for being part of the solution if they think the kid is at fault. They use the standard myths about student behaviour, respect for authority, order and control to get their way and justify their stance. When this young fellow who struggles with being good in school got out of line, the teacher got frustrated, raged out of frustration, then the principal did the same when the kid was sent to him. Mom came in, and he raged at her as well, according to mom. She decided that her kid didn't need to respect the principal anymore unless he respected them too. The principal denied the accusation, but Terry didn't buy it because he heard it too often by other people. The principal refused to work the problem out with the parents and with Terry, so being a new superintendent who has been challenging a number of outdated practices in the district as it is and raising enough hackles, he backed away from taking on this principal. He just wasn't sure if the political will was behind him or not. Instead, Terry thought, a bit ashamed of himself, "I took that path of least resistance, didn't I?" He ragged on the parents (they didn't hold much sway with the community so this made it easier), told them that they need to quit bailing their son out and cooperate with the school to solve problems." "Yeah, I let the school off the hook for building a workable relationship with these people: Simply taking responsibility for their raging and insulting and then holding the kid accountable, that's all it would have taken. Instead, I held the parents and the kid totally responsible," he recalled with regret. It didn't work and the parents and the school are still in conflict, he sighed to himself. "I am going to have to try to intervene again sometime, to be sure. That kid is either going to be suspended repeatedly or he will drop out early," Terry predicted.

Terry turned his attention back to Robert and Judy, asking Robert, "Help me understand why a teacher would be rude to you and would hassle you if you were being respectful to and cooperative with that teacher, Robert." Mom conceded, as is usually the case, that Robert was probably challenging the teacher or being disruptive, but she reinforced their initial complaint that this teacher insults kids regularly.

Terry shared with them his story about being a father with a young girl who often needed to learn that the onus of cooperation is on her as one student amongst many, and that her parents fully expected her to succeed in getting along with teachers, even ones she did not like. At this point Robert and mom both became agitated again. Walter assured them once more that he was not taking sides, but that he merely wanted to understand the situation better to be able to assist. He also noted that there would be all kinds of people in this world and that it is good to learn how to solve problems and live cooperatively with all of them. He reinforced that Robert needed to reflect on his own behavior and be truthful with himself, his mother, and now with him about how Robert actually contributed to this problem, and the level to which he did. He shared with them that after many years in education he seldom came across a teacher who disciplines a well-behaved, cooperative student for the sheer joy of doing so, but he also reiterated, "in dealing with student disruption or misbehavior we do expect our teachers to treat our students firmly if necessary, but definitely respectfully". Terry lectured Robert that he expected him to cooperate with his teachers and that so did his mother. Through discussion, mom and Terry came to verbal agreement that the school needed her to help Robert understand that he has a role to play in solving his own school-related problems, that he helped create them, and that he needs to know that she expects him to do so. Mom assured Terry in front of Robert that she expects him to cooperate and to do his part. But she also reminded Mr. Walters that she expected the teachers to treat her son with respect too. They discussed the difference between firmness and a need for control, and disrespect. They agreed that teachers can discipline with respect, and should do so if necessary.

They then agreed that Judy and Robert would go back to their school, and assure the teacher that they wanted to cooperate with him, but that they would discuss their need to have the teacher respect Robert as well. Both Robert and Judy thanked Walter for his assistance and assured him that they would try to work positively with the teacher to resolve the problem.

Terry then called the school to inform the principal about his conversation with Robert and Judy. He let him know that parent and son appeared willing to take responsibility for their behavior, and he explained that, "we should encourage the teacher to receive them in a positive, problem solving frame. Tell Barkstorm to explain his marking scheme to this student as well," Terry directed.

Don grumbled a bit about Robert, and he was a bit miffed that they went to Terry without going to him first. In a round about way, he let Terry know that he was not pleased that Terry had discussed the situation with them at all. Terry knew that there is an expectation that natural justice occur in which the complainant visit the teacher first, and then the principal, and move on from there.

"That's why I sent them back to you, Don," Terry emphasized, "because they hadn't yet gone to you with their latest litany of complaints, even though they have been in your office countless other times they tell me for related reasons."

Now in its pedagogical form, natural justice can serve as a problem-solving tool, Terry thought. "If what I did by calming them down and spending some time with them helped Judy and Robert reframe their issues towards a more cooperative manner, I would expect that the school might respond in kind," he wished. Not so, he could tell by Don's reception. From what Walter was experiencing, he decided that, really, natural justice is lived and experienced by many parents and students as a mechanism for controlling complaint. This same concept, he decided, often gets subverted as entitlement rather than as a tool that empowers conversation and problem solving. In fact, when he thought about it, he was part of the problem, because actually, he seldom took problems from parents and students who had already seen the teacher or the principal, reviewed the issues with both parties, and then identified his own solutions if the parties failed to come to some workable agreement. Instead, he, too, sent parents and students back to the school to have another go before getting involved directly. "No wonder parents and students feel so frustrated," he thought. Notwithstanding this regret, upon turning the problem back to the school, relieved, he grabbed a tea and got back to doing what superintendents do when the phone is quiet.

A meeting with the teacher and the parents took place. It broke down into lecture, argument, insult, and blame. From the family's perspective, the teacher told Robert exactly what he thought of Robert's behavior. He informed the parents that he merely disciplined their son and that he was not having any of this nonsense. The parents called back, and Terry routed them to the principal because they still had not gone to him. The principal assured Terry he would deal with the problem. Within two days, parents and principal were in Terry's office with the problem remaining unresolved.

Just prior to this meeting Terry discussed the issue with Don who informed him that this teacher does in fact insult students, but that most of it is meant in jest, that Robert is simply being overly sensitive, and that the kid does not take responsibility for his behavior. Terry pointed out what he thought to be the folly in this approach, and that this kind of working with kids like Robert needed to be rethought. "How it is meant is only minimally important," he emphasized, "how it is received is more to the point."

"Can't they see," he thought, "that we have higher expectations of kids than we do of the adults in the damn building! When a kid does something wrong because someone else did something, what do we say? 'Two wrongs don't make a right.'".

"You know, Don," he said, "even if a teacher is frustrated, a student's behavior does not justify inappropriate responding. This kid needs to be treated with firmness, but respect; with some caring, but expectation. Now, it appears that some of you have it in for this kid over there. We are not going to send this kid packing anytime soon, so let's get building the proper relationship with him so that he can get on track. Cut him some slack and let's start over."

Now Don was a bit angry, "We have been doing that. This kid needs to do his part too."

"Don, it does not appear that Barkstorm has cut the necessary slack or attempted to build an appropriate relationship. Let's get some action over there with this guy."

During the meeting with Terry, Don, mom, and dad, problems ensued. Don and Judy got into a scrap because although the principal conceded to the parents that this teacher was impatient and rude when frustrated, he persisted in defending the teacher to the point that the parents were completely enraged. They felt he was justifying unacceptable behaviour for the adult but expecting perfect behaviour from their kid, "a bit of an overstatement," Terry thought, as he watched with amazement as the principal persisted. “Christ, do we need some problem-solving capacity in this district,” he pondered.

Finally, upon reaching a stalemate, Terry became involved, clearly laid out his expectations for student behaviour, parent support, and teacher professionalism once again as he did with Robert and his mother, but more directly to the point. He then informed the principal that, “this teacher either resolve this issue with the parents by himself or with me mediating”.

They then took more time to debrief. Everyone appeared to behave more cooperatively, and the parents left. The principal assured Terry that he could bring this situation to a resolution, and that he didn’t need him to mediate. “It’s a funny thing,” Terry pondered to himself, “that none of these guys really want a mediated meeting between both parties and me? I wonder, why.” He had his suspicions.

The principal thanked Terry for his assistance and then left; nonetheless, Don found opportunities to complain to his colleagues after the fact during administrative meetings that his teachers and school administration do not feel supported by central office when dealing with parents and students.

Robert became a bit more cooperative. The teacher became less insulting. Instead of quitting school or driving to the next town as Robert was planning on doing had they not resolved this issue, after a few more rough goes that ended up in Mr. Walter’s office, he has graduated and has moved off into the adult world.

Terry Walters was certain, that had he given the school enough rein, they would have failed to take responsibility for making things work with this kid, and they would have proven him too problematic to remain in school. If not that, they would have continued erecting enough roadblocks to frustrate Robert until he left on his own accord. As it was, however, the school felt unsupported; yet, Terry believed he made too many compromises by not addressing unprofessional behaviour at times.

In one follow-up incident, even though the school was clearly part of the problem, Terry told Robert's dad to tell his kid to "buck up, quit judging his teachers, do his work, cooperate, and cut out his nonsense, just like you would expect from your employees," which was right to do. However, at the same time a teacher got away with gross unprofessional practice by not only letting Robert down, but by offering such poor instruction that the majority of her students would have failed her class, along with Robert, had Robert's parents not brought it to the office's attention. Terry can't help but wonder what would have happened to the students with less demanding, affluent parents had he not looked into the class marks, the failure rate, and the final exam marks as part of the follow up to Robert's final complaint. "Yeah, they were a pain in the neck, alright, but they weren't always wrong,"

"Imagine trying to keep a kid from graduating because he got a 48 on the final examination in a class that averaged 42 on this test and even less on the term marks with over 50% of the students failing the class. What nerve," Terry concluded. Not because of supervision of instruction, no, but because of Robert's parents four other students graduated and six others who otherwise wouldn't have, passed their course, all because the office finally intervened on a teacher who decided that she was using self-directed learning (which she interpreted as 20 or so minute absences from the classroom regularly, and very little assistance) with students who weren't self-directed. She showed contempt to the very students she was supposed to be nurturing by failing to assess their learning needs and instructing accordingly. Instead, she blamed them for not doing their share, which was also true, and argued with them about their bad behaviour. "Great teaching!" Terry concluded, tongue in cheek.

And how did the principal intervene on this teacher? The school office assumed the teacher's responsibility by assigning the student's extra work which someone else marked, not the teacher, and then they passed the kids to give an appearance of authenticity and accountability on the students' part. How did they address the teacher's conduct? The principal changed her teaching assignment for next year. He talked to her and laid out some expectations, "but the latitude was significant," Terry Walters criticized.

Deconstructing Narrative through Practical Wisdom

An initial deconstruction of this story would lead me to conclude that to discipline (a term which within the schooling context has come to mean to correct through reminder, direction, exclusion, removal of privileges, etc.) a student through insult and disrespect, even through frustration and anger, lacks pedagogical intent, as does concealing what you really feel about a student's efforts and work from an assessment perspective because some discourses of power and control have captured your attention more than the student's needs have. This deficiency is especially so with a student who suffers from a keen sense of injustice. To claim otherwise, even unwittingly so, is deceitful and marginalizing. To equate rudeness and insult with discipline demonstrates a profound sense of arrogance and intolerance towards the very other for whom the teacher is expected to listen with a discerning ear.

Conversely, being frustrated, and responding through frustration, but then admitting to it can be most pedagogical and can actually provide an opportunity through which to build a relationship with an otherwise difficult student. In working through openness regarding our own human frailties as teachers with a student such as Robert, and laying these frailties bare, I believe that we can provide spaces for these students to examine their own frailties, their own contributions to the situations in which we find ourselves. This approach has the potential to convert disciplining as punishment and reaction into an opportunity for discipling—as in creating disciples. To equate rudeness with pedagogy and then to try to sell it as such to the very individuals this rudeness has offended is about self-interest, discourses of power or some other unexamined imaginaries that pervade the teaching and learning discourse within current educational practice.

Finally, there is a practice of supervision of instruction that I witness repeatedly that this narrative brings into focus. It seems that much supervision of instruction occurs reactively around surveys and complaint. I think that supervision by complaint and by survey demonstrates a real disregard for the significant role that leadership fulfils in nurturing, observing, supporting, and expecting pedagogical intent. That Robert and his parents have had to bring significant learning and teaching issues to the office's attention suggests that the principal is not doing his job. Proactive supervision would be aware of the level of instruction in all classes. It would be able to spot a potential problem before students need suffer the full sting of instructional inadequacy such as what happened in Robert's case when he and so many fellow students failed a class in which the teacher failed to fulfill her responsibilities towards them for adequate, relevant, and effective assessment and instruction.

A Call to Inquiry (2)

This above deconstruction, as incomplete as it remains in its present form (as though one can ever really complete it!), represents a practitioner's attempt to better understand and to cope with situations such as this one that is repeated in schools and school systems on a regular basis. I have discussed situations such as those represented by this composite narrative concerning Robert with many of my colleagues, and there is some general consensus that the creative tension inherent in advocacy is typically becoming heightened and more stressful. As such, I feel it is necessary to develop greater leadership skill in dealing with conflict and rupture in the student/teacher relationship. This need is apparent in the definite shortsightedness regarding my own understanding of the presenting situation that this deconstruction of the above narrative demonstrates. In reflecting back on my own discussions with the Roberts, their mothers and principals, I sense that there remain unheard influences from various other discourses not yet surfaced.

Possibilities for Deconstructing Narrative through Hermeneutic Inquiry

From a conservative hermeneutic approach, a greater deconstruction of this narrative would look in more depth at the curricular traditions that pervade this narrative involving Robert and his encounter with his school. Critical hermeneutics would aid in discerning the resistances that Apple (1982) delineates as these resistances may be implicated in their positioning of Robert within and without the school system. This approach would also aid in surfacing the taken-for-granted power relations that precipitated this crisis. A radical hermeneutics would help attend to Smith's (1995) suggestion that to be involved pedagogically with children, educators must understand their own inverse crippling, "that is, their inevitable constraint within limits of knowledge and materiality" (p. 145). This hermeneutic approach would help lay bare some presuppositions, imaginaries or as Nietzsche (1805/1967) would call them, "little fictions", regarding the child/adult relationship that are implicated in this narrative. And the fourth approach, the moderate hermeneutic approach, would ask, "What ambiguities were explored that contributed towards an outcome? Which ones were left in deferral, and what may have been the resulting possibilities of surfacing these?

Chapter VI

The Question of Childhood and Pedagogy

A History Of Childhood

To enter the circle of hermeneutic interpretation, I want to examine some understandings of childhood and then curriculum in order to discuss how they may have insinuated themselves throughout the narratives about Robert and Jolene and their school system. Smith (1995) tells us that to work pedagogically with children we must understand our own childhoods, and childhood itself as a construct. Kennedy (1992/2000) problematizes childhood itself as a social construct. Quoting Nandy (1987), Kennedy (1992) reminds his reader that "childhood and adulthood are not two fixed phases of the human life-cycle," but that although they appear physiologically and chronologically as such, they are always "synchronically present in each personality" (p. 44). He reminds us that our maturity is not a fixed entity, but that it remains in question throughout our lives. "Birth, childhood, youth, middle age, old age, and death--are always present, but continually being reinterpreted, from whatever point at which self stands" (p. 44).

There are moments in both of the above narratives that this synchronicity of adult and child seems relevant. For instance, Jolene's reading of the situation that caused her to "recant" her story when she was being "interrogated" may actually have been an adult read of a losing proposition. What benefit would it have been for her to fight it out with the determination of a Sylvia or an Ivan and a Sam when she was in an inferior position by virtue of her role and age within a predetermined discourse? In contrast, what lessons could Ivan have learned by placing himself as child in Jolene's presence to gain an empathy regarding the way in which his actions affected Jolene, her interpretation of the events, and their meanings? Likewise for Robert, what would a properly mediated situation look like: One that places Robert in the role of instructor so that Mr. Barkstorm can be student again regarding the appropriate nature of student/teacher rapport? Would Robert be able to demonstrate how insult and disrespect damage that rapport such that as his teacher, Mr. Barkstorm can no longer be instructive for a student like Robert because this teacher has lost his moral authority, his legitimacy as teacher in Robert's eyes?

One way childhood is interpreted in our schools is to see it as a site of preparation for adulthood. Kennedy (1992 &1999) challenges this notion, reminding us that there is an intentionality of child that resists this reduction. Both Kennedy and Cunningham (1995) construct a history of changing notions of childhood through from Antiquity, Medieval Europe, and Modernity. They identify childhood in its divine, romantic, utilitarian, progressive, and adultomorphic—of becoming an adult—forms. These researchers demonstrate the changing emphasis of childhood as a projective site for family, industry, society, and adulthood, and they delineate various ways in which particular views of childhood potentially other the child.

When one compares and contrasts the deleterious effects on the child of the industrial notion of childhood with the impact on the child of the peasant family's understanding of childhood as a time of interrelated contribution to family life and well-being, childhood is revealed as a contingent social construct contested both throughout history and concurrently within its present context (Cunningham, 1995). In his discussion *Reconstructing Childhood: A Critique of the Ideology of Adulthood,* Nandy (1987) notes that "there are as many childhoods as there are families and cultures, and the consciousness of childhood is as much a cultural datum as [it is] patterns of child-rearing and the social role of the child" (p. 56). A problematization of childhood recognizes that as a mechanism of power, childhood has the potential to be positively productive and to contribute to the welfare of children. However, depending upon how it is utilized, and because of its general acceptance as a given and its function as an ideology, in its performative state, childhood can and does have serious marginalizing consequences. An understanding of this potential erasure of the child through each particular application of childhood can serve to orient pedagogical intent. Kennedy (2000) suggests that childhood is a site for psychological projection. To be aware of our projections as teachers frees us to see through childhood and experience the child towards which our pedagogy is being directed. In his presentation on the *Iconography of Childhood*, Kennedy assures his listeners that reflecting on the projective nature of childhood becomes a "hermeneutic act if we think of [our projections] as fore-structures of our understanding. As we see these fore-structures, we can open a dialogue with them" (p. 2).

Cunningham (1995) traces the social construction of childhood throughout history, some of which is used here to clarify an understanding of childhood as a social construct. The Puritans recognized childhood as the site of original sin and regarded children as "sinful polluted creatures" (p. 70). They applied various procedures of power to control children's thoughts and their bodies. During the industrial revolution, childhood was a site for surplus labor, co opting children to the service of the insatiable engines of productivity. Romanticism offered new ways of "thinking about childhood and ways of organizing the lives of children" (p. 71). The romantic era (which like all other historical influences is synchronically present today) "sought to recover for childhood a freedom of imagination which utilitarianism would have quashed" (p. 72). Although romanticism restored joy to children's lives, we are cautioned by both Cunningham (1995) and Kennedy (1999 & 2000) that in its pathological form, romantic childhood notions become projectoral sites for rescuing adults from their own utilitarian lives with devastating consequences to children.

For the purpose of this analysis, what is significant about the changing conceptions of childhood is that the way we view childhood has substantial consequences, both positive and negative, for children. For instance, Cunningham (1995) notes that under the influence of romanticism, child rearing was returned to the mother's domain and "the death rate of English aristocratic children under the age of five dropped by 30 percent" (p. 69). We are reminded that "the family as an institution may have survived the industrial revolution, but many individual children did not" (p. 89).

In his book *The Disappearance of Childhood*, Postman (1994) articulates the ways in which a highly literate society places great preparatory demands on children and, as such, extends childhood and schooling to now seventeen, eighteen, and some would argue 30 or more years. In its pathological form, childhood gets co-opted to serve the social literacy needs, with blatant disregard to children's natural biological limitations. Postman notes that "reading instruction must begin at an early age, when children are not biologically suited to the rigors of immobility" (p. 76). In a literate society, childhood experiences an extended period of immaturity to mediate the gap between childhood illiteracy and adult literacy. "The principles of managed information and sequential learning" (p. 72) extend childhood with many obvious implications for pedagogy. In contrast, Postman explains how in a media-enhanced society, childhood is once again reduced in time and significance because less mediation for access to information is required (reminiscent of the context that gave rise to the industrial revolution's view of childhood).

Questioning Pedagogical Intent through a Problematization of Childhood

This study seeks to discover the possibilities for pedagogical practice when childhood is problematized such that the child offers him/herself as a site for deconstructing the adult. Van Manen (1990) agrees that "educators who are involved in a pedagogic relationship in a self-forgetful manner have experienced this effect of children in their lives" (p. 6). It is through our engagement with children as educators that we learn about that for which our pedagogy stands. When we critically reflect upon our interactions in the classroom with children, we question our orientation towards both childhood and adulthood, and their synchronic dialogic interplay.

In contrast, I think that when we forget to problematize childhood, instead of journeying with the child through his/her childhood as we dialogically journey through our adulthoods, we become locked in confrontation with the child and with ourselves. When we forget to problematize childhood, we battle over the right and wrong education, over the right and wrong methodologies, and over the right and wrong curriculum, often at the expense of our pedagogical intent. Kennedy (1999) expands this discussion by noting that "the child is an enemy within the gates of a civilization mastered by materialism, [and] calculative reason…[and that] the child has a long history of symbolizing the mysteries of adult consciousness" (p. 390).

In his discussion on the politics of youth crime and the way in which youth crime is a social construct, Schissel (1997) cautions that "media depictions of young criminals as the new folk devils are fraught with biased images…[and that] the public's common sense understandings of young criminals originate with fictionalized, distorted stereotypical accounts of young offenders" (p. 22). As this discourse becomes legitimated through the knowledge of experts such as teachers and principals, it becomes and remains the operative discourse through which many of us come to understand children and our need to respond to them. He further suggests that fear and hatred have become unexamined ideologies that structure our collective consciousness about children. This way of viewing children, serves to limit our approach to children within educational institutions, locating pedagogy squarely within practices of punishment and exclusion.

For instance, when defending the need to rely on suspension and expulsion as tools for maintaining control and order in schools, I repeatedly hear from principals and teachers that children today are worse than they were in days gone by, and that today's children require solid consequences for misbehaviour. The call to grapple with what is meant by this "worse" and what it means to our practice is often received as an indictment of blame that "merely attempts to shift" discussion from "the incorrigible child" to the teacher who is "the victim of child rudeness, disrespect, misbehavior, and indolence".

Recently, I took part in a public meeting intended to inform the local police force on current trends in crime. The discussion became focused on how youth today are disrespectful towards authority, towards their community, and towards adults. This opinion began to dominate the discussion. However, when I suggested that youth today are no "worse" than they were in the past, but that they are different in their orientation towards authority (not unlike in kind the change in orientation that adults currently demonstrate towards authority), we began to discuss how this change might call for a new orientation towards youth that emphasizes a respectful, relevant exercise of authority within well established relationships. For example, a few participants began to explore the need for strong police officer/school liaison programs aimed at establishing such relationships between students and officers. Others discussed the need for local business to be involved in schooling so that these relationships could develop, and other participants noted a lack of meaningful community-based activities that engage local youth with their communities in positive ways that forge significant bonds.

Deconstructing Narrative through a Problematization of Childhood

By applying a problematization of childhood to the above narratives, I can see how teachers and principals may have come to an understanding of their authority over the child as an unquestionable given. Although they utilized that authority as a procedure of power with apparent contempt towards Jolene and Robert, they may have done so with a clear belief that the authority of the adult must be deferred to for the child's own good, because childhood is about respecting adulthood, irrespective of the adult's behaviors. I can hear Robert's teacher say, "It's a good lesson for all kids to learn, especially spoiled ones." His principal's response seemed less contemptuous, but he also defended the authority of the adult over the child to the exclusion of the child's own sense of dignity, as initially did Sylvia along with Sam and Ivan. The superintendents' responses were located in an understanding of adulthood as a time of custodial care over childhood with a certain resident authority, but Jim and Terry did attempt to let the effects of their use of that authority as a school system stand in a relationship of critique with Jolene and Robert, respectively.

By Terry taking this stance, both Judy and her son, Robert, felt compelled to recognize the adult's authority over the child (taken here to mean the one in charge of decision making and directing the activities of the other) because even though it is contested regularly, this remains the prevailing discourse of our times. Nonetheless, they insisted that that authority be practiced with respect, an emergent discourse that provides tension to the discourses of adult control over children's lives. The principal and Mr. Barkstorm sensed a devaluation of their authority by Terry's stance, and one of the concerns about which the principal cautioned Terry was that he would destroy the teacher's ability to discipline and control his students. It appears that Robert's principal and teacher; and in Jolene's narrative, Sylvia, Ivan, and Sam believed that student misbehavior or "brazenness" (I can hear them call it such) legitimized a ruthless, disrespectful application of adult authority over the child because the child was not deserving of the adult's respect. It appears that for these educators, for Sylvia less so, all that should have remained in question was the extent and degree of discipline that was going to be applied to the child so that order and control could be maintained. Terry and Jim disagreed, and hence the tension and stress in their respective relationships heightened. There is no doubt that Superintendent Walter's tried to support the school by attempting to help Robert recognize the school's need for his cooperation and good will, but his support was filtered through an understanding that authority can be practiced with caring and respect because children are as entitled to this caring and respect as are adults, even misbehaving ones.

Chapter VII

The Question of Curriculum and Pedagogy

A History of Curriculum

Now I want to turn to a discussion on curriculum traditions to orient this analysis so that I can place the above interpretations, based on problematizing childhood, into play with ones that might emerge through a problematization of curriculum, another discourse that pervades the above narratives on Jolene and Robert. Writers such as Cuban (1984), and Giroux (1981) remind their readers that curriculum is more than just what is written, but that there is a confluence of ambiguities in operation in all classrooms, at all times where the hidden, formal, and lived curricula intersect. Giroux and McLaren (1989) suggest that the work of pedagogy is to ensure that curriculum practices

> draw upon student experience as both a narrative for agency and a referent for critique. This direction suggests curriculum policies and modes of pedagogy that both confirm and critically engage the knowledge and experience through which students authorize their own voices and social identities. (p. 149)

The work of interpretive pedagogy, then, is to assist students in identifying themselves in the curriculum and the classroom. To hold the curriculum in its contested nature and practice such contestation, even as one masters the content expectations and expected learner outcomes, is the work of a well-informed (maybe even superhuman) pedagogy that journeys through curriculum ambiguities. This work is impossible for a teacher who too closely aligns with one or other of the various curricular confluences that are currently informing curriculum discourse. For example, a teacher too closely aligned to either the structural-functionalist framework or the progressive schema could battle to implement the formal, the informal or the lived curriculum with little recognition of the competing challenges that actually exist in curriculum. Without a philosophical perspective for practicing an interpretive orientation towards curriculum, pedagogy becomes instrumentalized, impoverishing both teachers' and students' lives.

For both Jolene and Robert, the lived and informal curricula of their respective schools served to discredit, not credit, their personal narratives with significant personal consequences. Jolene was infused with self-doubts. The self-doubt to possibly not even be able to recognize a future intrusion on her personal space, physical safety, and general wellbeing. Robert became locked in a protracted, losing conflict with his teachers that was resulting in repeated suspensions from class and from school. If not for some intervention, he may have dropped out, failed or been expelled. Slee (1995) notes that authoritative disciplinary actions and suspension “increases resistance, alienation, and the likelihood of further disruption” (p. 59). In her review of studies on the *Schooling of Boys*, Skelton (2001) confirms that “those boys who were doing badly academically [were] likely to criticize, reject or sabotage the system…[and that] status could be achieved among their peers by adopting such behaviours as being ‘cheeky’ to teachers, playing truant, smoking, drinking, and not doing homework” (p. 25). Skelton’s study reviews ways in which boy’s failure can be “located in the environment of the schools”. (p. 25). This locus of failure and misbehaviour discussion has significant relevance for deconstructing Robert’s narrative. Although structural-functionalist curriculum and behaviourist discourses suggest otherwise, it is too simplistic and unreflective for his teachers and principal to merely hold Robert accountable for his actions. Slee notes that "disruption cannot be dismissed as individual deficiency, as a kind of 'irrational, pathological syndrome'; intelligent students describe their considered and purposive resistance to 'heavy handed discipline, to hypocritical teacher behaviour, and to poor teaching'" (p.25). Slee further qualifies that discipline policy can "actually shield: ineffective teaching; irrelevant curriculum; [and] the exclusion of student voices from governance" (p. 22). He resists this approach to misbehaviour and discipline since "the absence of reciprocity denies the improvement of the educator" (p. 26).

In *Curriculum for the New Millennium*, Glatthorn and Jailall (2000) identify a variety of curricular streams which they observe to be "ebbing at times, then gathering strength and flowing together in a dynamic confluence…[such that]…at any given time in our curricular history, several curriculum streams or orientations are operating" (p. 98). In his study on curriculum development in Canada, Wotherspoon (1998) delineates the curriculum orientations in operation. The structural functionalist orientation takes for granted that social reproduction, "the process by which social order and continuity are maintained from generation to generation" (p. 18), is curriculum's rightful work. Social reproduction is accomplished through "mechanisms of grading, granting credentials, and more informal selection processes…[such that schooling effectively]…sorts individuals to fill distinct positions in the social hierarchy" (p. 18). Posner (1998) declares that when the outcomes are accepted as taken-for-granted universal truths, curriculum planning becomes a mere technical concern that decides such issues as "instructional method and content, a matter best reserved for people with technical expertise" (p. 82). In effect, curriculum development is left to the experts and the overall agenda is one of cultural assimilation and reproduction of the operative power relations that legitimate the status quo, deciding what can be said and what must be ignored, suppressed or eliminated from the curriculum discourse.

In both structural functionalism as well as in its critique, various writers have surfaced the implications of a hidden curriculum that exists along side the formal program of studies. Wotherspoon (1998) confirms these observations in his research, noting that:

> Whereas the formal curriculum conveys the social expectations attached to learning and educational outcomes, the hidden curriculum refers to the more informal or less explicitly defined characteristics that, none the less, are regular features of the schooling process. School-based learning consists of much more than simply the content of lessons, textbooks, and rules that students are presented with…Students learn values of conformity, competitiveness, deferred gratification, obedience to authority, and adjustment to success and failure through their experiences in classrooms and other school settings. (p. 19)

Both the formal and the hidden curriculums are considered by and large to fall within what is called a technical-rational curriculum orientation. Wotherspoon identifies two related orientations: the technical-rational orientation which emphasizes the way technological and scientific advances inform curriculum requirements, and the human capital orientation that emphasizes our economic society's need for "trained, innovative personnel who can contribute to scientific and technological development"

(p. 20). This latter orientation invigorates contemporary reforms that emphasize "competitiveness, human resource development and the need to match skills with jobs" (pp. 20-21).

In his discussion on educational progressivism, Wotherspoon (1998) confirms that this curriculum orientation critiques existing social hierarchies and their reproductive curricular goals and procedures. Critical theorists take up this mantle suggesting that "schools foster, at best, boredom and restricted opportunities for success or, worse, dehumanization and habituation into destructive routines" (p. 23) through Canons that reproduce inequitable social arrangements. Foucault (1977/1980) positions curriculum as a procedure of power that succeeds in "making children's bodies the object of highly complex systems of manipulations and conditioning" (p. 125). He further shows that power is a productive force as confirmed by the vast scientific and technological productions of technical-rational thought, and that one's situatedness within a power relation either enhances or threatens one's welfare. Foucault recognizes that as a site of repression, power marginalizes such that it "represses nature, the instincts, a class, individuals…power [is] an organ of repression" (p. 90). Technical-rational curricula can be seen as mechanisms of power that both produce, and through their successes, have the potential to blind us to their less desirous effects. In their pathological applications, technical-rational curricula can be extremely repressive and show inordinate disregard for students. Slee (2000), in his lecture entitled "International Perspectives on Inclusion", suggests that a rigid approach to curriculum pathologizes students and loses its ability to examine its own limitations.

Likewise, the hotly debated whole language, continuous pupil progress, and like movements based on progressive education also have a pathological side that results in uninformed, self-centered individuality and a loss of responsibility to the social order from which that self derives its existence. From a conservative perspective, there is a sense that students need some grounding in the traditions and histories that make up the questions that inform their progressive explorations. A curriculum based heavily on opinion and individual preference is one that runs the risk of ignoring the complex historical and social struggles that infuse the ethical considerations of a grounded critical inquiry. Wotherspoon (1998) draws attention to this paradox citing Durkheim's (1933) observation that it is necessary to "discover some basis of cohesion or solidarity that keeps societies from disintegrating amidst an increasing individualism, individual rights, and self-interest" (p. 16).

This issue of social responsibility always causes me concern over the way I respond to situations such as Robert's. When children become too critical of other people's actions, do they lose their ability to become cohesive members of a social organization? When my own children have come up against an inappropriate exercise of authority in the classroom, I have never as a parent "bailed them out" so to speak. Rather, my wife and I have tried to help them critically reflect upon the forms of inadequacy or abuse that that authority assumes and practices on them, and to evaluate the need to risk living with the consequences of taking on that authority: The consequences of subtle withholdings, lower marks, exclusions, withheld instruction—intentional or unwitting passive-aggressive acts that unexamined, immature authority has the potential to assume. A significant number of parents indicate that such consequences do occur in schools. It is this concern that many parents will cite for not dealing with what they perceive as substandard, insensitive, inappropriate or abusive teaching. We have tried to equip our daughters with the skills to shield themselves from the damaging effects that an abusive or inappropriately applied authority can have on children's psyches by helping them to not personalize these acts, and by deconstructing with them our own parenting practices that too perform forms of violence because of our own humanness and inadequacies. We have tried to build an empathic capacity that helps them understand the possible reasons one might practice an inappropriate authority; but we have also tried to equip them with the discernment to know when one simply must address such authority, which for the average child is not often. My wife and I have tried to help them understand that essentially, they need to equip themselves with the skills to be able to work with all kinds of people in all kinds of roles, and to do so such that they experience positive results. For students, this usually means figuring out what their teacher needs, make it work, take full responsibility for their own learning, and the abuse becomes minimal or the negligence has minimal effect on the student's own well-being or learning capacity. There is a curriculum of achievement and success here that has worked reasonably well for my own daughters, I think, but even so, this anecdote in no way signifies that this approach is desirable? Is it desirable that children have to second-guess their teachers to "make it work" because their teachers are too immature to enter into an examination of their own practice by utilizing their students' knowledge of that practice?

Just because this is the approach we have taken with our daughters, though, and it appears to be equipping them with the skills they need to succeed in their schooling, this does not mean that this approach is right for everyone. Children come from a variety of family backgrounds. Some families are academically well suited; others value what they consider to be practical knowledge of working with real-world technologies, toys, and activities. Some families value obedience to adult authority; others place more value on individuality, and the assertion of rights. Furthermore, this child-burdensome approach eliminates the need for teachers to take responsibility for their use of authority, and places all the responsibility on children who now become the adults as they stand as wily pedagogues in relationship with an inappropriate authority that lacks self-awareness. This approach has built character for my girls, but has it for their teachers? For the over sensitive child, I think it holds some pedagogical value. There is no doubt that Robert could benefit from utilizing this lesson to become a more cooperative, forgiving student. In fact, Terry tried to help Robert realize this lesson, but maybe with Mr. Barkstorm, Robert was assessing that, "No. Your authority is just too abusive!" Likewise, initially, Jolene also said, "No. This is going too far!"

This analysis also must consider the student whose parents just cannot accept this side-step approach to dealing with questionable or problematic teaching and authority. When parents and schools fight over the right and wrong of a particular teaching situation or over a particular application of school authority and their struggle remains unresolved, it is my experience that children come out the losers. Children are pitted against their teachers by angry, unsupportive parents. They are set up to challenge the teacher's authority over sundry issues, most with some validity to them.

Nonetheless, students stand up against their teachers, risking serious negative consequences. Likewise, teachers who cannot admit to their misdoings have a very difficult time holding students accountable for misbehaviour because they begin to lack the moral authority to engage pedagogically with children. Instead, many of these teachers, some unwittingly, expend energy catching students doing wrong things, engaging in conflictual win/lose, and right and wrong battles.

It takes a very mature teacher to really reflect on his/her teaching and admit mistakes. Why is that? Is it because teaching is such a public act? This question is an important one that needs some consideration. There is not doubt that teachers are expected to be professionals by the public and that many hold their decisions and acts to scrutiny. There is a discourse of professionalism and expertise that pressures teachers, I am sure, into not easily engaging in reflective practice, because to do so risks one's expertise, one's need to know and to be correct, when viewed from the prevailing modernist discourse of our times. Nonetheless, modernity is not the only discourse in our time, and even in our professional lives there has been much discussion of the need for reflective practice, action research, and a number of other approaches that have arisen from the emerging pedagogies of being as discussed throughout this paper.

Questioning Pedagogical Intent through a Problematization of Curriculum

As previously noted, the hope with which Foucault (1977/1980) leaves me in this discussion on power and knowledge is that the sites of power often contain their own opportunities for rebellion. A search for dialogical possibilities, positions the progressive movement with its emphasis on child-centered learning, exploration and meaning-making, currently called constructivism (Caine & Caine 1997), as the natural site of resistance to the technical-rational impulse. In his discussions on the formal, hidden, and lived curriculums, Apple (1982) identifies what he calls a counter curriculum that those who feel oppressed by the formal and informal curricula nurture and assume (p. 101). He describes how, paradoxically, students will oppress themselves by exercising power through resistance over the school's formal and informal curricula in order to gain immediate control over their lives. The mechanisms of power of the counter curriculum include truancy, incomplete assignments, behavioral acting out, and dropping out of school (p. 101). The work of pedagogy might be to recognize these resistances as such, to validate their existence, and to work through them with students to inform curriculum relevancy in the classroom.

What is learned from this discussion is that pedagogy is affected by a confluence of curriculum strands that generate a surplus of curricular intents. There is contradiction and ambiguity in curriculum implementation, and as such, it requires an interpretive form of pedagogical practice that examines the formal, informal, and lived curricula to bring interpretive value to curriculum as it affects students' lives.

Deconstructing Narrative Through a Problematization of Curriculum

If I further apply the above analysis of curriculum to an ongoing deconstruction of my narrative about Robert, I can see how the teacher, Mr. Barkstorm, may have understood himself as an authority that reproduces curriculum knowledge in the student, and that this effort to reproduce well requires absolute obedience to the curriculum tradition: How the curriculum tradition and current public calls for accountability to this tradition creates an urgency of obedience. Nonetheless, I can also understand how Robert might come to experience this controlling impulse as repressive, almost violent to his playfulness, and to his disregard for authority for the sake of authority. For instance, in his studies on education, Apple (1982) reflects a neo-Marxist critique of the reproductive nature of schooling relative to class structure. He observed that students from business and executive class schools are less constrained by authority in their schooling than are students in working class schools, and that this challenge to authority helps to ensure their successful induction into business class functions later in life. Apple described these students as ones who challenge authority, engage in exploration, and push the norm. It is not difficult to conceive how Robert's family may have experienced trans-generational resentment towards the school for its inability to respond to the curricular intention by which their success is realized. It could be that, indeed, the school misunderstood Robert's playfulness and challenge to authority as misbehaviour and defiance instead of as the actual curricular imperatives of the moment that too contained legitimate teaching and learning opportunities: A hidden curriculum that required surfacing and study.

Terry's shortfall in dealing with this situation may have been in not building an understanding and empathy for each member's sense of participation within this dialectic and struggle for relevancy. By and large, teachers come from working class or professional homes. It is my experience that these families tend to easily accommodate the technical-rational curricular structures, and the present relations of power and social stratifications around which schooling tends to be organized. It may be that teachers, even Terry, so closely identify with these discourses that they fail to recognize their own subjectivities and teaching identities. An encounter with Robert may have been an opportunity to begin surfacing those identities, and place them into play. Rather than sacrificing Robert to the insatiable demands of unexamined subjectivities that identified more with discourses of expertise, authority, curriculum as content, and adultness than with pedagogical responsiveness, his teachers might actually begin to gain what Foucault calls agency over situations such as the ones described in the narrative. Within a praxis of agency the school may have allowed curriculum to become unfixed: Responsive to Robert's call for relevancy.

Carson (2003) talks about negotiating identities through teacher development programs that address this very need for educators to become aware of their subjectivities. He notes that there currently exists a paucity of understanding relative to the need for this kind of work in teacher development programming even though "it is the identity of the teacher that is being re-negotiated in socially transformative educational reforms" (p. 9). In his discussion entitled *Negotiating Identities: Subjectivities, Curriculum Change and Teacher Development*, he proposes that there is hopefulness in this work through post-structuralism which "provides a theory of the subject that allows productive insights into the dynamics of identity formation and institutional change" (p. 12). It is my belief that pedagogical responsiveness necessitates a deconstruction of the self such that responding is dialogical rather than self-protective as demonstrated by the insular nature of schooling as encountered by Robert in the above narrative, and previously by Jolene.

Chapter VIII

The Question of Globalization and Pedagogy

The Globalization Discourse

Earlier in this dissertation, questions about pedagogy were opened up through a problematization of childhood and curriculum. As this dissertation progresses, pedagogical intent is beginning to be understood as a questioning facility enabled by a dialogical process of examination. Traditions, discourses of power, and the reopening of narratives such as childhood, authority, and curriculum have provided a framework for continuing in this search for pedagogical intent in educational leadership during conflict resolution. It is my belief that this next discussion is equally revealing in that pedagogical intent throws into question the practices of exclusion by suspension, expulsion, and the medicalization of students. There is a pedagogical call for a need to continue the struggle for adequate programming and for the prioritization of resources in order to meet a range of student learning needs. Exclusionary practices occur regularly in schooling. They come to the attention of educational leaders through staff requests, placement and programming appeals, and suspension hearings. These practices represent significant limit situations in our pedagogical responsiveness to students, especially those with behavioural learning needs, who easily become marginalized by what I propose to be a current globalization discourse that normalizes our schooling landscapes. Globalization itself is an imaginary that has the potential to, and in my experience it does, legitimize certain understandings of childhood, adulthood, achievement, success, failure, authority, and curriculum. At the same time, globalization as an unproblematized public truth serves to create an educative urgency that marginalizes and makes problematic inclusive re-conceptualizations of these above mentioned traditions and discourses. I propose that an uncritical orientation regarding globalization cripples educational leadership in its desire to intervene on a student's behalf during attempts at conflict resolution.

In their discussion regarding the development of globalization and its effects on educational reform, Halsey, Lauder, Brown, and Stuart Wells (1997/2001) provide a comprehensive introduction to an anthology of extensive research on globalization. They trace the changing beliefs of Western societies from a commitment to economic nationalism and the role of the nation state as the provider of "prosperity, security, and opportunity" (p. 2) through economic growth, full employment, and education to the present commitment and belief in a more international global economy with the role of the nation state becoming weakened in its regulatory powers over economic development and prosperity. This waning of the economic powers of the state and the subsequent movement from a liberal faith in social welfare, trade unionism, and the social wage to the New Right's reliance on "competitive individualism and market competition" (p. 6) has resulted in a need to reassert state relevance. Halsey et al. (1997/2001) propose that the reassertion of state relevance is being accomplished in part through a re-emphasis on education as holding "even greater importance than in the past to the future of individual and national economic prosperity" (p. 7). These authors suggest that in this new climate, "education has assumed even greater political significance" (p. 8); As such, education receives intense public and political scrutiny.

Relevant to the question of this research regarding the difficulty of remaining pedagogically centered in high stress educational environments, the effects of globalization on educational reform are pertinent. Halsey et al. sketch the way this renewed politicized dependence on and state inspection of education exerts significant conflicting pressures on teachers to shift pedagogy from a holistic concern over the wellbeing of students, their social, emotional, and intellectual lives, towards reduced pedagogies that serve the political power needs of the state such that classrooms, students, leaders, and teachers become sites for realizing the accountability demands being placed upon politicians as they struggle for relevance in a new global economy. Present accountability reforms have the potential to significantly politicize education by equating student success and achievement with the state's urgent need for global economic relevance. The authors talk about the way in which "the credibility attached to academic credentials remains based on 'objective' assessments of 'knowledge' epitomized by the 'unseen' examination paper" (pp. 10-11). These authors further argue that social skills deemed necessary for participation in a global economy "are now encouraged purely for their instrumental value and have been thereby co-opted for corporate profit-making rather than as a means of furthering the qualities associated with caring and human development" (p. 11).

The social and interpersonal spheres of children's lives that used to be left more to what has previously in this dissertation been referred to as the informal and hidden curricula are now becoming more pertinent to and intensified by the formal curriculum such that they now are measured and inspected. For instance, in British Columbia, the Ministry of Education has developed student social responsibility performance standards that are being used with increasing frequency as tools that measure student growth and teacher skill in achieving accountability targets set to improve social cooperation. Halsey et al. suggest that the intensification of education into student's social and emotional lives can be interpreted as Foucault (1997) would "as increasing surveillance and discipline of the individual…where every aspect of peoples' lives comes under the formal gaze of 'authority' for certification" (p. 12). Quoting Illich and Verne (1976), Halsey et al. (1997/2001) note that "professional educators, through the institution of permanent education, succeed in convincing [students] of their permanent incompetence" (p. 12).

Much of the improvement work in British Columbia today focuses on measuring student interaction and behaviour, assessing it, then designing and implementing corrective or validating programs to support "good" behaviours and eliminate "undesirable" social responses. Along with early literacy, student social responsibility is the top identified area for school improvement all across this province. Effective behavioural programs, reward systems, and meta-cognitive teaching strategies are being employed to this great socializing enterprise. Minimal discussion takes place regarding the school's organizational and curricular structures, the pedagogies practiced or the adult/child interactions that may be complicit in the formation and sustaining of current student social interaction. Teacher modeling and rapport, and curricular relevance are largely spared the same inspection students receive as this improvement agenda gets understood as "fixing", "minimizing" or "isolating" student deficiencies.

Furthermore, as a discourse, globalization has the power to significantly reduce pedagogy to procedures of accountability and economic promise. The political, public discourse superficially ignores the impediments that poverty, loss of family structure, transience, labour instability, and other social realities have on children's potential to achieve academically and socially in structured school classrooms that are oriented towards measurement, accountability, and expediency. Halsey et al. further disclose the way that class, gender, and culture are being re-conceptualized by the globalization discourse as insignificant factors that need not affect a child's potential to succeed in classrooms with highly skilled teachers. Present accountability movements assume that teachers can mediate individual student differences and learning needs through properly applied instructional techniques that net expedient achievement results as measured. They note that "educational research primarily, then, focuses on what make[s], for example, an effective school…[and on how]…schools [can] compete successfully irrespective of the nature of the school intake" (p. 21). They further summarize how this argument is politically attractive

> because it assumes that raising educational standards for all is simply a question of school management and quality teaching. In other words, school success or failure is determined by the management of the school and the quality of the teachers. In effect, schools could compensate for society, so long, of course, as the appropriate leadership was in place to head the management team (Grace Ch. 20). This then enabled questions about family and child poverty and their impact on educational performance to be regarded as irrelevant. (p. 22)

Halsey et al (1997/2001) note that even though there is much research to indicate that school intake factors do indeed affect overall achievement, the globalization discourse as understood politically and publicly ignores this preponderance of evidence in favor of adopting a superficial, instrumental view that is non-critical and optimistic regarding the role that education and teachers can play in ensuring economic global relevance.

There is little doubt that the accountability pressures faced by teachers, and by me, as a superintendent, are great. Performance measures are imposed with regularity and with increased inspection over our classrooms and our school districts. Presently in British Columbia, the Ministry of Education inspects school and district achievement results by establishing an external team of parents, teachers, administrators, ministry staff, and educational leaders for one third of the districts in the province each year: Teams to visit and review district and school improvement plans and their achievement results to grade them on ten indicators of success. The grades that each district achieves will be publicized through the media, with the Minister of Education offering commentary on each district's successes and growth areas. If a district is "in need of support" an external advisor will be hired by the Ministry at the district's expense to address any serious achievement issues to which the district has failed to attend. As an educational leader, I face such an inspection, and the pressure to perform well is great. Three times a year, my colleagues and I are called to a central meeting place with the Ministry. We are expected to present "best practices" that are being used to implement this improvement agenda, and those that "improve student achievement". Inherent in presentation as a mode for communicating in such a high stakes forum with reputations on the line is untruth. Each presentation is packaged such that as a participant, I have the feeling that every district in British Columbia is efficiently implementing well-established best practices, now being termed "breakthrough practices" that are miraculously improving student achievement. As an educational leader, I am left feeling inadequate.

Efforts that I as an educational leader have engaged in with and through others to "improve student achievement" have been either implemented with partial success, resisted, superficially implemented, embraced with enthusiasm but without the necessary deep thought to understand their impacts on students' lives, or have been successful according to one measure, but not by another. Improvement efforts are never perfect, never fully complete, and never as technically or instrumentally successful as one might presume from the presentations referred to above. An acknowledgement of the failure of instrumental school improvement efforts to fully live up to their promises is absented within the present accountability climate.

There is no doubt that the accountability requirement for success pressures me such that my messaging to teachers and principals about what is important about pedagogical practice becomes inconsistent; notwithstanding these pressures, though, I do see my leadership role as needing to lead through this very intense improvement agenda such that pedagogical practices that nurture student health and wellbeing remain the outcome. Bracher (2002) defines education as

> a function of identity and desire: In order to have any success at all, it must engage the identities and desires of students, teachers, and the government and public who pay the bills; and it must direct those desires towards its fundamental aims, which are to produce collective benefits for society and personal benefits for students. (p. 94).

Bracher further suggests that educators are challenged to ensure that they nurture and attend to relevant desires, and that they minimize or eliminate the distraction that irrelevant aims and motives bring to the learning environment of the classroom. He suggests that:

> The fundamental challenge for educators, then, is to understand the multiple identity components and desires that pervade the educational field; and to variously recruit, redirect, reinforce, circumvent, or neutralize these forces in all parties, and particularly in themselves and their students, in such a way that the dominant vector of students' desire moves them towards the educational ends of the social and personal benefits. (p. 93)

As an educational leader, I too believe Bracher's claim that I am responsible to mediate this accountability agenda such that students are cared for and nurtured as learners.

As earlier expressed, I believe that if one teaches well, then one need not be concerned with the technical measures that others impose because successful teaching maximizes the engagement, the sense of caring, and the validation that students experience as they strive to achieve mutually relevant, and realistic intended learning outcomes. I try to operate on the belief that when assessed by criterion-referenced external measures used to norm results, pedagogies of caring fair well enough. Nonetheless, in this intensified accountability climate, I find myself talking to principals and teachers as much about foundation skills assessment results, provincial examination results, graduation rates, aboriginal student achievement results, and social responsibility surveys, as I do about pedagogies of care. There is inconsistent messaging given by this accountability agenda that in British Columbia currently urges educators to make it all about achievement, about all achievement, and about the achievement of all students but also warns that what gets measured counts, and only what gets measured. The British Columbia accountability agenda as described represents how I have come to experience it and hear it. My work of focusing attention on children's presenting learning needs has been intensified by this climate and by my own inconsistent messaging of which I am only recently being made aware. The following narrative reflects the struggle that I as a leader feel regarding the desire to remain focused on student wellbeing in such a contradictory climate.

Billy's Troubles

As superintendent Askew was going through his in box, he came across another long-term suspension letter, this one for a grade two student. The last one that came across his desk was for a grade one kid. The letter read, "Dear Mrs. Crumbles, be advised that in accordance with section such and such of the school act…your son Billy will be suspended indefinitely from school for up to 20 school days or until such time as we meet to establish an appropriate educational placement for him." Jerry's first response was to grab the phone and lay into Principal Calvin. "Imagine suspending a grade two student because he poses a 'significant risk to his fellow students and staff'," Jerry vented to his assistant as he re-read the letter. At any rate, he tossed it aside and decided that he better cool down before he got on the phone to review this letter with Calvin, a well established principal in the district.

Jerry Askew was a new superintendent to the school district and he could not believe the number of suspensions that were handed out to students. The suspension policy gave principals a right to suspend students for up to 20 school days without going to the school board, and schools were not at all shy when it came to exercising the fullness of the latitude extended them by policy. By reviewing the suspension data that he had compiled from the past three years, and after receiving what he considered to be an inordinate number of suspension letters for students from grades 1 to grades 12 already, and it was only October 18th, of the New Year, Jerry decided it was time to take action. He had already begun questioning the practice of suspension around the administrators' table, but he could not believe the defensiveness and, by some, the anger with which he was greeted. Not one principal openly agreed that perhaps suspension was a way of not taking responsibility over changing student behaviour. He really raised their collective dander when he suggested that this over reliance on suspension actually served to cripple teaching by reducing the expectation that teachers become adept at dealing with student behaviour as a natural teaching dimension. As a group, principals were opposed to opening up the suspension policy for review and revision reminding their superintendent, "Students and parents have to take responsibility for their own or their child's behaviour!" with resounding agreement. Jerry noted that some principals, a minority, kept their heads low, and he read this as mild support or as playing both sides, he wasn't sure which.

Jerry was certain from what he was hearing from teachers and principals about student misbehaviour, its escalation and solutions, that the suspension practice in the district was actually crippling good teaching by allowing teachers and principals to view student misbehavior as someone else's problem, someone else's failure and irresponsibility. He sensed an unbalanced judgmental attitude but self-exoneration in their stance towards students and parents.

Nonetheless, he persisted, and when he brought the issue to the Board of School Trustees, they felt vindicated in their own long standing concerns over what they deemed to be "blatant abuse of authority through student suspension," as Mrs. Truman triumphantly summed up what she considered to be the community's perspective on this issue. Actually, Jerry suspected that she significantly overstated the case, and knew that many community members were attuned to their schools' zero-tolerance policy, especially since so much media attention was being given to violence, bullying and harassment issues, but he was pleased to have their support and their motion to refer the suspension policy to the policy committee. Jerry believed that staff and much of the community had adopted a literal interpretation of the Zero-Tolerance movement to mean zero tolerance for "bad kids" as opposed to zero tolerance for certain acts or behaviours. He also recognized that there would need to be a lot of discussion and professional development around utilizing well-constructed learning opportunities for students as opposed to simple punishment in implementing this reframed zero-tolerance approach. He hadn't expected so much anger and resistance, though, especially from educational leaders.

Now with this new letter on his desk, he decided that besides reviewing the policy and implementing a long-term professional development approach to addressing this desired cultural shift, he was going to take more immediate action. So after refreshing his coffee cup and settling himself down, he picked up the phone for what he suspected would become a difficult encounter.

"Calvin, how are you this morning? Did you get out for some golfing yesterday?" he began with the usual niceties. "How are things going in school?"

"By the way, I have this suspension letter for a Billy Crumble. Could you fill me in on this one?" finally getting to the point.

"Oh here we go again," sighed Calvin to himself, "we're back on this suspension kick," he thought. He resented this new superintendent. "Here is this young idealist without near the practical experience as I have trying to tell me how to run my school. I was running schools when he was still in primary classes, long before he ran off to the ivory towers to get his head filled with irrelevant theories!" Calvin resented as he kept Jerry waiting for a response.

"Hello, Calvin?" Jerry persisted.

"Well, yeah. This Billy he is a real handful, you know. He disrupts his class continuously. He is an active, unfocused grade two student. He was a handful for his kindergarten and grade one teachers, but he is driving old Mrs. Dalloway crazy, and she is an experienced teacher, you know. He has not only become a distraction but now he is becoming a safety problem, so it was time to do something," Calvin asserted testily.

"Okay, has he been tested and coded?"

"Well, of course. He is ADHD [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disordered] and CD [Conduct Disordered]," Calvin responded.

"Coded severe behaviour?" Jerry confirmed.

"Ah, yeah he was coded last year."

"IPP [individual program plan] in place?"

"Yeah but none of that theoretical shit has done any good. Look this parent needs to take responsibility and get this kid straightened out. He is undisciplined, and she needs to do her job," Calvin replied, "and that is why I wrote that suspension letter. He needs to go home, and she needs to get her discipline in order and get him ready for school. She also needs to get him on Ritalin, which she refuses to do. He should not be allowed back into school unless he is on Ritalin, if you ask me. We can't do it all, you know, Jerry. Parents have to do their part, too." Calvin reasserted himself, in an almost condescending way.

Jerry could feel his ire rising. "Its always the same with this bully," he thought, "ignore best practices, demean theory, and belittle to get your way: And this is what we sent to university to become an educational leader!" The Ritalin comment really irked Jerry, because he was not sold on forcing kids to take Ritalin as a prerequisite to coming to school, but he was hearing this concern voiced more and more often by the principals. "Who do we think we are?" he thought. "Now we are going to start joining with the medical community to force people on prescription drugs!" He decided to ignore the comment and move on.

"What kind of supports do you have in school? An aide, I suppose, a timeout place, and special education supports?" Jerry continued.

"Yeah, all of that, but that isn't what this is about. This is about a kid who does not belong in school right now and a parent who needs to take responsibility for her son."

"Is this mom married, Calvin?"

"No, she's divorced?"

"Is she a stay at home mom?"

"No, she works, I think."

"Well, how is she supposed to look after this kid, Calvin?"

"That's not really my problem, now is it?"

"Actually, it is our problem." Jerry became authoritarian sounding now because he had had enough. "This young fellow is to be returned to school immediately. We are not suspending severe behaviour grade two students for behavioral problems unless suspension is a short-term part of their IPP, it is agreed upon, and it has the potential to make a positive difference to their learning outcomes. We are not going to simply ignore workable best practices from the field, Calvin. You phone up mom and set up a multidisciplinary IPP meeting with her, and let me know when it will be held. In the interim, unless you can set the meeting up for tomorrow, you tell mom to send Billy back to school in the morning."

"Damn it, Jerry, this is wrong. You are going to take responsibility if this kid hurts someone." Calvin challenged.

"Calvin, if you are telling me that you do not have the resources or that no one in that school knows how to restrain or contain a grade two student with all the aid support and special education supports that we are giving to that school, then we will need to get the people in place who can do so," Jerry warned. "Now, if Billy is a threat to student safety, and don't feed me this hogwash about staff safety because I will not accept it, contain that threat or set the meeting up over the next few days so we can put a plan in place to have this kid back in school within the next few days if not tomorrow," Jerry felt himself soften in his resolve.

"Well, that's better. I will set up a meeting and let you know today when it is. It isn't easy to get everyone together on short notice," Calvin complained.

"Yes, that is better." thought Jerry, "It's always the same with these guys: Bossy authoritarianism only seems to know how to respond to bossy authoritarianism." He hated sounding bossy with his staff, but Calvin really pushed things here.

"Do your best and we will go with whomever we get to begin with. This will be a first meeting of many, I suspect. Let's get some community agency support for mom around that table as well," Jerry suggested.

"What, are you taking part in this IPP meeting? Don't you think the teachers will be a bit intimidated by your presence? We haven't done that around here before, you know, with the last superintendent. It's not part of our culture here," Calvin warned.

"I am sure that you will be able to set the stage in the school, Calvin, so that teachers will see me as a partner in problem solving rather than as a threat. Let me know if you need any help with this task." Jerry concluded.

Calvin didn't bother to respond, so Jerry said, "Keep me posted," and he hung up. Jerry really hated this part of his job. He hated feeling like a lone advocate for students, and he was tired of being viewed as a bleeding heart softy or as an unrealistic idealist with theories and no practice. Really, he was a teacher for ten years, a school-based administrator for almost as long and surely that counted for something. But he heard the comments, and he knew what was being said. He could just imagine that Calvin was already on the phone complaining to his colleagues who were all sitting in their offices judging every word. "They would all be distracted once again," he regretted, "from their real work of simply rolling up their sleeves, working with teachers and kids, and making good things happen for all students." "That's what we pay these guys up to ninety thousand a year to do. Not to make excuses, and lay blame for problems," he complained to his assistant. "We really need to build our leadership and problem-solving capacities in this district," he decided.

Jerry actually felt intimidated when he pulled up to the Short Shrift Elementary School parking lot. Teachers' eyes were on him, he felt, as he entered the door, and he tried to feign confidence as he remained congenial. Calvin was a bit cold, but he greeted Jerry just the same, and they exchanged a few niceties. "At least Calvin understands decorum and professionalism at its surface," Jerry considered as they entered the meeting room together.

The group had not yet assembled, but Mrs. Crumble was already seated. Jerry recognized her by her attire, which was somewhat frumpy if he could find a word to describe it, so he went over to greet her, and to introduce himself. He thanked her for coming, let her know that he was the superintendent of schools, and that he would be taking part in these meetings to help build a workable program for her son, Billy. She brightened noticeably, Jerry thought, as she thanked him for taking the time to work on her son's behalf. She seemed to be an articulate lady, but she certainly looked downtrodden to Jerry. She explained how frustrated she was with the lack of success they were having with Billy, and that she was devastated when she got the letter from the school. "How am I going to be expected to look after Billy if he is not in school, when I have to work in the daytime?" she asked. Jerry assured her that a homebound component would only become part of Billy's IPP if it was feasible, and if it would benefit him in achieving his behavioural goals. Then, he sat down away from her so as not to appear to merely be taking her side. The mental health psychologist, district counselor, child and family services support worker who was working with the family, the special education teacher, and the classroom teacher all eventually showed up and the meeting began.

After introductions, Calvin explained, "We are here today because Billy cannot seem to get a handle on his problems at school. His behaviour is escalating out of control, so we have to build a program that works. He is a threat to other students, and he continuously interrupts their learning."

"And a threat to staff," the teachers added in agreement. "He punches when he doesn't want to do as he is asked, he slaps, and he throws tantrums," they clarified.

The classroom teacher continued, "I have 22 other students in this class, two of them who are coded with special education needs, but for learning, not behaviour like Billy, and I have only one aid for half of the day. Billy needs constant attention, and I can't give it to him. We have a curriculum to get through, here, and we cannot have Billy disrupting other students' learning, now can we? Furthermore, I will not work in a room where my own safety is not being addressed," she declared, looking around the room feeling somewhat pleased with herself for having stood her ground.

Jerry felt his blood boil a bit as he listened. He knew from his own experiences as a principal that for some teachers, although requiring their ongoing diligence as good teachers, kids like Billy fair not badly and appear less ADHD or CD than they do as when they are in other teacher's classrooms. He remembered Mrs. Barton. She could really fit these kids in well. She accepted their shortcomings, seldom showed her frustration or got angry with them, and kids like this usually faired reasonably well in her classes. "ADHD and CD are labels that have significant consequences in certain environments," he thought to himself as he listened growing impatient. He knew it was important to have good solid structure, a lot of give and take with these kids, and persistence in focusing them through a variety of both subtle and direct ways. But he also conceded to himself that some extra resources and supports were necessary as well.

Anyway, Jerry decided to sit things out a bit and see who was going to take control to move this meeting towards some proactive problem solving. He remembered that he had a tendency to too quickly jump towards solutions and to not let the problems emerge, as fully defined as possible. In some past meetings during his assistantship, he became too authoritarian about problem solving and created some resentment around the decisions, so he was going to try to sit tight, he decided.

The school psychologist asked, "What about some more special education time?" She was met with a bit of stone, cold silence.

Finally the special education teacher said, "I already have a full load of students, thanks. I am already working with Billy both in his classroom, and in the special education classroom for one period a day," she stated as a declaration and a challenge.

"What about some more teacher assistant time?" the psychologist persisted.

Now Mrs. Dalloway became agitated and declared, "We have already assessed the amount of aide time that can be given to Billy. He is not our only student, you know. We have other students with learning needs and we are not going to rob them of their aide time just because Billy doesn't know how to behave himself."

"What about sending him home until he comes back to school more ready to learn? We have always been able to use homebound programming when we needed to before. He needs a bit of discipline at home too, and a consistent message that he has to listen in school, and we need mom to reinforce this message for him," Mrs. Dalloway continued, undeterred.

"God, these people are gutsy," Jerry thought, "a bit arrogant, and a bit stupid to boot," he concluded. But he decided to wait a little longer, and if Calvin or someone didn't pick up the ball, he knew that he would have to.

"What do you people think I do?" Mrs. Crumble began to tear up, frustrated. "I discipline him at home as best as I can! He is hard to deal with at home too, you know, but I just keep trying. I am getting help from Mrs. Candor, my family support worker, here, and I am also taking a parenting course that she set up for me. As I agreed to in our last meeting with you people, we are trying to have more routines and I am trying to do my part, but I can't help him at home during the day when I am at work now can I?" She continued to wipe at her tears.

Suddenly, the vipers softened Jerry observed. "Now that they reduced her to tears and stripped her of her dignity", he reflected, "perhaps now they might try to be humane with her."

Mrs. Springer, the special education teacher, asked in a soft, but condescending voice nonetheless, "Have you been giving him his Ritalin, as the doctor prescribed?"

"We have already been through this before, and you know I do not believe in Ritalin. There are side effects you know, and it doesn't work for Billy, so don't even go there," now she became agitated and more assertive herself. "I am not stupid, you know, and I am trying other non-medical options that don't include drugs," she asserted.

"Well there are other medicines, besides Ritalin that can help him achieve a bit of focus, Mrs. Crumble," Mrs. Springer persisted, not to be out done.

"Excuse me, but we are working with Mrs. Crumble on the medical and non-medical approaches to aiding Billy with his condition," Mrs. Acrobat, the family mental health worker, interjected. "She is also getting some important help around parenting and setting up sound structures in the home. Mrs. Crumble and Billy have had many family disruptions lately and it is not going to be easy for Billy to focus at school, but having him at home as punishment is not very helpful either. We will continue to help Billy and Victoria improve their parent/child relationship, but you cannot yet realistically expect her to be able to do more than address school problems by reinforcing her expectations with a few home consequences when you communicate problems to her. Some schools use a communications book. Can we not set up a communications book for Victoria?" she concluded.

"We already have one, and sometime it comes back and sometime it doesn't," responded Mrs. Dalloway, feeling slightly vindicated.

"Well, Billy doesn't always bring his book home, and sometimes he forgets to take it back to school with him."

"Well, why don't we set up some routines at home around the communications book, and some consequences for forgetting it, and can the school set up some routines for Billy so that there are some checks and balances around him having his communications book?" Mrs. Acrobat persisted.

"Well, with a class of 23 students, I don't have time to check if he has his communications book at the end of the day. It is difficult enough to find the time to write in it every day. We cover a lot of curriculum in a day, and I simply don't have the time to baby-sit Billy. Doesn't he have to take some responsibility himself?" demanded Mrs. Dalloway.

No one answered, and Jerry waited. He looked at Calvin, but Calvin merely shifted his eye contact to someone else or to outer space.

"Look," Jerry cleared his throat and sat up, "we have an important responsibility here in helping make a difference for Billy while he is still young, so we are going to have to become informed about some proven approaches in behavioural programming, prioritize his learning needs over some others right now, and marshal some resources to his program. Mrs. Dalloway, either you or your aide is going to have to be responsible for working out a routine with Billy where at the end of the day he shows you his communications book and he puts it in his back pack while in your presence." "Furthermore," Jerry continued, "there are always compromises with resources, and it appears that establishing routines, timeouts, and consequences for Billy is one of our more pressing concerns right now so we may have to borrow resources from other less urgent student needs in order to bring Billy under control in the school environment."

"Now," he paused for effect, "I would like to know how this school is going to address Billy's needs, right here in the school. It sounds like Mrs. Dalloway needs more assistance from special education. When last I looked, we had one special education and one learning assistance teacher in this school. We may need to re-prioritize those schedules to bring some greater focus to Billy's program right now. Anyway, how is the school going to structure Billy's day for success?"

Now Jerry turned the ball back to the school professionals, and looked directly at each of them repeatedly to communicate that he expected them to begin structuring Billy's day for success. Finally, he fixed his sights on Calvin.

"What about your small reading group, Mrs. Springer, what do you have, five students from grades one and two?" Calvin asked reluctantly.

"Yeah, I suppose I could have Billy in that group. Its first period in the afternoon, though," she noted, looking at Mrs. Dalloway as though wanting to be rescued. Jerry couldn't help but think that she ought to have been ashamed of herself for not offering in the first place.

"Well, he has his biggest problems focusing during math in the mornings and during the afternoon anyway, so that might be good. He could use some extra reading assistance as well," Mrs. Dalloway responded.

"What about during phys. ed.? He causes the most problems in that class. Could I have some aide time then?" she asked.

Jerry looked at Calvin, and Calvin responded, "We will have to see what we can do with the schedule."

"Does that mean that she is getting support for her physical education class? That seems like a reasonable request to me since Billy is most problematic in less structured settings, no?" Jerry asked.

"Yes, I said I would see what I could do," Calvin responded a little testily.

"How are we going to solve the supervision issue at noon and during breaks. He causes significant problems during these times for other kids?" Mrs. Springer asked.

They looked at Jerry. He looked at Calvin.

"Well, we will have to look at the supervision schedule," Calvin offered, "and have an aide for him during these times. We might need more aide time from central office given to the school," Calvin threw the ball back at Jerry.

"You got it, but first make sure that you have fully examined your own aide time already allocated and take any that you can for this purpose. We will cover the remainder of the break time that you can't." Jerry knew that he would be on the hook for the total amount, and that he would need to beg forgiveness later for the debt he just created, but he thought he would contribute and maybe hopefully even build some expectation around the issue of prioritizing for the most significant cases. "Billy will also need some timeout space. Is the special education room an appropriate location or the office?" Jerry thought that he better become part of the solution now, hoping that this would appease the staff for the hard line he took earlier.

The meeting continued, and the staff set up an enhanced structure to Billy's school day. Problems persisted on and off, as is usual in these cases. The staff tended to hold Jerry responsible for Billy's regressions and slow progress any chance they got, but he persisted and continued to attend the next three IPP meetings. "There are no immediate, quick fixes: Just long-term, consistent attempts that in these cases result in slow and small payoffs that accumulate over time," he would respond. "What matters is that we are giving it our best shot. We applied our joint thinking to solving Billy's problems, and we are looking after him as we are ethically and professionally responsible to do," he would offer.

One of the staff stopped Jerry in the hallway one day and told him how insulted she was that he insinuated that the school wasn't doing their part with Billy at the initial IPP meeting. She didn't think that the parent or the community workers needed to hear that, and that if he wanted to lecture them, he should have done it during a private meeting with them.

Jerry let her know that he felt that, prior to his getting involved, the community members had already made up their minds about the staff's total lack of professionalism in that meeting, and that he ought to have disciplined them all for their failure to assume professional responsibility, not to mention their apparent ignorance of or disregard for best practices regarding these severe behavioural cases. In the end, they agreed that they should continue to work together to support Billy. She never really forgave him though, because she still acts like she has a bit of a chip on her shoulders whenever he enters the school.

One of the community support personnel phoned Jerry one day and thanked him for shifting the focus regarding these students. She said, "Off the record, this school was never really responsive to these real difficult kids' learning needs, and they usually just blamed the parents at these meetings." She was happy that the school was taking more responsibility now.

Calvin never forgave Jerry for intruding on his territory in dealing with this issue. He continues to complain and blame, any chance he gets in any venue, about how school decisions are now being made from central office, and that "we are letting parents totally off the hook for their children, now". Jerry would love to remind Calvin that school decisions are his until he mishandles them, but he doesn't. He also can't help but think, "I will be so glad when that jerk either moves on or retires!"

Questioning Pedagogical Intent Through Narrative Analysis

Although the characters and the actual events as described are factual fictions, this composite narrative captures my experiences—the feelings, intensities, and educative principles involved—of trying to lead through difficult decisions regarding the placement of and programming for students with special education designations. The field of special education has a history and practice of assessment, consultation and analysis, coding, funding, and individual program development. In my experience, integration, followed by the inclusion of students with special needs has at minimum a fifteen-year history with shared theories and practices that have developed over this span of years as a consequence of trial, error, and outcome analysis. Some practices have shown to be more effective than others in improving learning conditions for students with special needs. Notwithstanding this knowledge claim that special education as a field of expertise makes regarding these "best practices", there is by no means agreement in schools about how best to educate a severe behavioural student like Billy, for instance. Overall, individual education plans that recognize behaviour training as a legitimate learning outcome, sufficient multidisciplinary supports for the teacher and the student, consistent communications with the home, and shared reinforcement for agreed to behavioral outcomes are all considered within the special education field to represent solid approaches to managing students with severe behavioural issues that minimize distraction from overall classroom effectiveness or student success. Uditsky (1993) notes that the integration and inclusion of special needs students in Canadian schools has shown "no negative effects on the students without disabilities" (p. 85), noting positive outcomes for all students.

Both the Alberta and the British Columbia ministries of education provide manuals and support documents to aid in the development of individual program plans: Documents that outline suggested goals, outcomes, and strategies. Nowhere in these documents or in the accepted literature of the field have I seen it described that suspending a severe behavioural student for a long-term suspension for his general disruptive behavioural problems is a reasonable, responsible or valid approach to educating such a child. Sending a child home as a form of punishment to a parent who is complicit in, ineffective with or frustrated with his/her child's inappropriate behavioural patterns or back home to a parent who lacks the necessary skills, time, and resources to address the child's behavioural issues has nowhere that I am aware of been shown to be an effective way of educating such a child. Yet, I have encountered a number of situations in both Alberta and British Columbia in which teachers and principals have attempted to use suspension, and in parts of British Columbia what is called homebound programming as a means for dealing with these students.

This observation does not preclude the possibility that suspension and homebound programming might have a legitimate role in helping to educate these children, but it is my experience that these approaches need to be used with reserve, and only when the home can appropriately support the desired learning outcomes that these tools are intended to address. In both provinces, the Ministries of Education provide schools with extra funds to support severe behavioural programs for coded students. Now, it can reasonably be argued that "there are not enough resources", and that "the funding is insufficient", arguments I encounter so often. Regardless, I see it as our professional obligation to work with the resources we have, to work within the current understandings and expectations within the field (the theories and practices of educating special education children), and to prioritize learning needs so that all students can gain as much as possible from our educational efforts.

Uditsky (1993) notes that the exclusion of special education students from the schooling environment differs from school to school. His studies on the acceptance and rejection of these students by schools have revealed that:

> Two children could live in the same community, belong to different public systems and one would be welcome and one would not. The same student rejected by one community would be accepted and welcomed at another. There was no relationship to the degree of disability, the size of the school or school

> systems, the age of the student, urban or rural, well resourced or poorly resourced. Values made the difference, and the only difference. (p. 87)

This composite narrative about Billy demonstrates the constant struggle of prioritizing resources, and of being professional and creative within the existing resource pool to program for all pupils, but it also uncovers [illegible] overarching unwillingness to accept responsibility for student differences and special needs. Uditsky notes that, "Fundamental to the process of inclusion is a set of principles which ensures that the student with a disability is viewed as a valued and needed member of the school community in every respect." (p. 88) Billy was certainly not viewed as such by the school staff.

Mrs. Dalloway talked about "robbing" from other students for Billy. I have encountered this sense of other students being cheated because some students need so much attention, time, and financial support, especially since the intensification of the accountability agenda. There is no doubt that the inputs are never equal; but don't we have to consider the outputs as well? For Billy to succeed in school and beyond, for him to be given a half-decent opportunity to become a successful, responsible citizen (many studies show that there is a correlation between student failure, unresolved school behavioural problems, and crime rates in later life) the efforts and inputs needed are much more significant than are those that are required for his more academically, socially appropriate peers. An orientation towards children and their wellbeing would, I think, concern itself as much with equity of output as it would with inputs. It would concern itself more with the quality of life that each child will be prepared by our efforts to access and enjoy than it would be with any inequity of inputs, perceived or real.

A refusal to heed this call for differentiated effort and need as a fact of educating students in a heterogeneous society characterized by different social stratifications, variant parenting styles and abilities, and individual student starting points is thrown into question by pedagogical intent. It is my experience that this attitude of resistance is common in schooling environments, and that it actually privileges notions of contempt, anger, and victimization about needing to teach the Billy's in this world. Indeed, the present accountability agenda as mentioned earlier is being quoted more frequently as rationale for not teaching the Billy's of this world. Perversely, the accountability agenda is providing justification for attitudes of resentment about having to teach the Billy's: The very students that pedagogical intent calls us to support through consistent pedagogies of caring. Resentment is an attitude that is shared with other students' parents and expressed back by these parents when they are told that their children's teachers don't have adequate time to teacher their children because of the Billy's of this world. This attitude validates feelings of blame and hostility towards parents "who have failed their children". All of these attitudes are surfaced in this narrative about Billy and his mother, Mrs. Crumble, who is reduced to tears and defensiveness by the onslaught of attack that she feels coming from the teaching staff.

In fairness, though, I also must remain sensitive to the competing needs that teachers deal with daily. There are never enough resources, time or personnel to address what anyone would consider to be the ideal educational situation for each child. So educating is and always has necessitated making compromises, cutting losses, and making do with what is available.. The questions and struggles always remain, "Which compromises, whose losses, whose efforts, and what outcomes?" The globalization discourse and its accountability movement have served to intensify these questions for all educators and school leaders.

Calvin demonstrated contempt for the combined theory and emergent best practices that are being shared throughout the special education field. These practices require full teacher participation, partnership building, and an expectation for effective programming and instruction. In other words, they place responsibility back on teachers to work with the context and within the context of each student's life and learning needs to program for success. There is an expectation that the classroom teacher in consultation with the special education teacher (in some schools the relationship is reversed) takes responsibility to bring together relevant support agencies, educators, and the parents to develop shared goals, outcomes, and strategies that constitute the student's educational program. The point isn't to build the right program; it is to build a program that is agreed upon and that everyone agrees works for this student, this teacher, this classroom, and this parent. For some, that might mean using Ritalin as a means to settling the student down enough to gain a focus as a starting point to programming.[6] For others it might mean providing greater structure. There exist a myriad of programming approaches not really the point of this paper. The point is that programming is to remain connected to the knowledge and understandings of the field, that it is agreed upon, and that it seems to work as assessed by some agreed to outcomes and measures of goal attainment. Programming, then, is based upon student wellbeing and success as determined by shared values, beliefs, and understandings.

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[6] Slee (1995) suggests that medicalization may very well be a Foucauldian disciplinary practice over children's bodies in order to render them compliant to an unreflective, untheorized administrative impulse. It is his view that "the trend towards the medicalization of disruptive behaviour denies the complexity of troubled schooling" (p. 172).

Although it represents a good bet for many children, a caution about agreement as a programming principle is that agreement may not be oriented towards children and their interests. Sometimes, agreement is much more constructed by discourses of power, authority, adult superiority, childhood, punishment, and training, all of which come into play. I have been involved in special educational programming where staffs, using their “expert knowledge”, have convinced parents that it is in their children’s best interests to repeatedly experience failure as a means for improving their efforts and abilities. Failure as an instructional tool with a special education student who struggles with learning really has to be questioned. I have come to believe that repeated failure either as retention or as consistent failure on report cards, although often justified as a tool for “teaching students that they need to expend more effort” or as a way of creating an “appropriate placement” or of “keeping the student in touch with reality”, is really a way of reducing the expectation for consistent, effective instructional practice. Ainscow (1993) suggests that rather than merely retreating to the safety and comfort that special educational discourses offer by “focusing attention on particular pupils in this individualized way…within this individualistic gaze,” school and teachers can benefit when they, “see pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning as a source of understanding how teaching and classroom conditions can be improved.” (p. 206).

Nonetheless, there is a need to remember that teachers do practice within discourses that they have seen, experienced, and have been trained in as well (Britzman 1991). Is it unfair to expect teachers and principals to escape the prevailing discourses of their professional culture just because some "young, idealistic" superintendent comes along and says so, as Calvin would interpret his superintendent's actions? This interpretation is one that I am certain is applied to my leadership practice by principals and teachers with whom I have had to work within conflict resolution situations such as described by this composite narrative.

Within this interpretive frame, I must consider the world of contradictions and realities in which teachers and principals operate. There is an expectation that teachers keep their classrooms functional, and likewise principals their schools. The functional often is interpreted as being orderly, respectful, time-on-task oriented, and achievement focused. Mrs. Dalloway's understanding of the curriculum as a product based upon sort and sift, exclusionary methodologies rather than as a journey that can include Billy is not an isolated notion. I have repeatedly heard this concern that there is a curriculum to get through, or in Alberta, that "our achievement test results will suffer". Understanding schooling as "getting through a curriculum" or as being accountable to some achievement test over and above a student's best educational interests is an interpretation against which special education students place profoundly contradictory expectations upon classroom teachers and their principals. Likewise, understanding school safety and zero tolerance as suspending and expelling students to protect other students places profound contradictory demands on classroom teachers and principals when it comes to dealing with severe behavioural students.

Notwithstanding the earlier discussion on globalization, since I cannot help but think that these superficial interpretations regarding curriculum, achievement tests, accountability, and school safety are more excuses for not taking responsibility than they are actual contradictions, this attitude does represent a bias in my leadership practice with which I must grapple. I struggle with the unwillingness that educators demonstrate regarding the importance that pedagogy plays in ensuring that these so called "contradictions" actually become tools in enhancing student learning and wellbeing. All of these tools must pass through a pedagogical interpretive before they impact students lives; therefore, I hold us as educators responsible for ensuring that curriculum, misbehaviour, special educational practices, achievement tests, safety and zero tolerance, as imaginaries, serve as tools for improving educational opportunities for all students rather than as weapons that sort, sift, and exclude "undesirable" students.

In reviewing my narratives and the contents of this study, though, a concern I have about leadership is the heavy-handedness and intolerance that can be detected in Jerry's and even Jim, and Terry's responses and their attitudes towards what they seem to perceive to be both an unwillingness, and an uninformed professionalism: The way in which, for instance, as expressed by Sylvia in Jolene's narrative that even mention of the word pedagogy outside of the context of university studies, in the context in which professionals, practicing principals and teachers live their lives, is referenced as "theory" and is met with hostility, defensiveness, and ridicule.

As expressed by Calvin, attitudes of hostility towards theory as impractical "ivory tower" thinking, as I have heard it called by educators, are worn as a sort of "rite of passage" in the culture of schooling. This relationship between theory and practice is an important one that is often polarized in the educative environment of schools where "practice"—which can also be taken to mean any practice that an educator has become comfortable using—becomes valorized. There is a pedagogical call here to retain the dialectical nature of theory and practice in schools. In his study on *Changing Theories and Practices of Discipline*, Roger Slee (1995) notes the practicality of good theory. Slee cautions that untheorized practices of discipline, and by extrapolation it can be inferred, student placement or conflict resolution involving student learning needs, result in impoverished pedagogies and school organizational practices, drastically limiting "the potential for intervention, school improvement, and successful learning" (Slee, 1995, p. 91). He explains, "teachers tend to exonerate school organization, curriculum and teaching from the discipline matrix," (p. 89). He further posits that, "The tendency to avoid theory in matters of school discipline in preference to practical solutions is itself misleading. Denying theory most frequently means the absence of theoretical knowledge" (p. 78). Ball (1990) notes that "good research does not necessarily solve a problem, but could reformulate a question, bringing out the key issues, and pointing to a new direction for a solution" (p. 14) (as cited in Slee 1995). Slee cautions that a largely untheorized understanding of discipline has resulted in "reductionism, where control is the imperative, discipline and education the casualties" (p. 13). "Teachers," he says, "have fallen behind the general social movement from authoritarian to democratic relationships," and that, "improving classroom behaviour accordingly becomes a question of effecting change in the arena of interpersonal relations in the school" (p. 13). Evans (1999) remarks that misbehaviour is less a factor of student behaviour and more a factor of school policies and practices. He notes, "evidence suggests that referrals reflect teachers' beliefs—not, therefore, the pupils' behaviour" (p. 29).

This current attempt to theorize my engagement with the contemporary educative project as an educational leader is important as a philosophical hermeneutic entry into the question of pedagogical intent as I struggle to understand my work with children, teachers, and parents. In a review of the hegemonic nature of education in its production of self, Ilan Gur-Ze'Ev (2001) cautions that "education in general…is the production of subjects who essentially function as agents and victims of the system". As such, they are "objects for manipulation, committed to the destruction, exclusion, marginalization, or salvation of the external and internal Other" (p. 255). He discusses the refusal to acknowledge the otherness of the other in educational practices, but he also goes on to explore ways in which otherness can "not only be acknowledged and respected, but conceived as a precondition for self reflection and transcendence and as an unconditional moral commitment" (p. 257). Theory serves as an otherness to practice; as such, theory offers opportunities to teachers and educational leaders to question the way in which their own identities are implicated in their practices. It serves as an opportunity to become aware of the discourses and traditions that inform and limit practice.

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that other children's parents exert pressures, for instance, on Billy's principal and teachers to maintain a safe, orderly, respectful environment.[7] There is a desire to rely on practices that they have come to expect and have seen as useful in achieving this goal; thus, the question gets asked, "Is it possible that Billy simply does not belong in the classroom or even in the school?" And the question that this question brings to an examination of leadership practice is "Is it pedagogical to be intolerant to this question?" Why, for instance, does Jerry refuse to accept that Billy does not belong in school? Why does Terry view failure, suspension, and expulsion as weapons that both deny and represent our failure as pedagogues when so many other educators view them as rightful acknowledgement of student defiance or inappropriateness to the learning environment?

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[7] I cannot help but hold us as educators somewhat suspect for having helped create the context for this public discourse and demand for "safety", "orderliness", and "respect" through the short-sighted ways

Deconstructing Pedagogical Intent Through a Problematization of Globalization

As previously mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the globalization discourse percolates through our schools, staff rooms, methodologies, and consciousness, and I have come to believe that it significantly impedes pedagogical responsiveness such that it allows educators to feel justified and vindicated in their privileging of self as authority and expert, and of curriculum as a product. This discourse legitimizes sort, sift, and exclusionary methodologies. These privileged discourses significantly displace the pedagogical concern for students, their learning needs, their interests, their wellbeings, and their future potentialities. In partial response to the above questions, I think that critical readings regarding the way

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educators as experts have helped frame this discourse. In his study entitled, *Blaming Children: Youth Crime, Moral Panics and the Politics of Hate*, Schissel (1997) discusses ways in which educators have helped create the public discourse regarding "bad" youth: Manifest messages that "society is too lenient with children and that the only way to restore public safety and appropriate conduct is to become 'tough' about law and order" (p. 104). This same discourse gets applied to classrooms regarding misbehaviour.

globalization as a discourse legitimates such "malpractice" contribute to my refusal to accept that students like Billy do not belong in school.

Equating our responsiveness to children with economic principles of financial success, opportunity, accountability, and competitiveness as expressed by Mrs. Dalloway in the narrative is becoming quite pervasive in our thinking about students and their schooling. It may represent an uncritical if not unwitting acceptance of this globalization imaginary that justifies pitting Billy's needs against other students' needs or excluding Billy because "we have a curriculum to get through" or because he will "lower our scores on the achievement tests" in Alberta or presently in British Columbia, the foundation skills assessments.

The way globalization affects our lives is highly disputed, but one consolidated metaphor emerging from the discussion is life lived in competition, as one in sport or battle. Barlow and Robertson (1994) define this competitive global perspective as being divided according to "those who have embraced the free market as the means and purposes of participation in public life…[and] those who must live with the effects of a system dedicated, by definition, to the acquisition of privilege and profit" (p. vi). A public truth that Barlow and Robertson identify, and which can be argued influences teachers' understanding of their work with children, is the axiom that "with the threat of global competition…we no longer have a choice, [and] the only question worth debating is how best to adapt to the primacy of the markets" (pp. vi-vii). This kind of ideological influence may have the power to impair teachers' interpretive abilities when making decisions affecting their pedagogical stance.

In Alberta Learning's *Three Year Plan for Education 1998/1999 to 2000/2001*, "people" taken here to mean students, are identified as "government's most important business and Alberta's most important resource" (p. 3). This document further states that "the province's education system gives all Alberta students access to quality programs, helps them achieve high standards and prepares them for work, further study and citizenship…which will help prepare them for participation in the global economy" (pp. 3-4). Kachur and Harrison (1999) caution that the goals that set the stage for education in Alberta draw our attention as educators to the ever increasing "privatization, marketization, and commodification of educational services" (p. xxi). They note that our "current tendency to equate education with economic growth…[leaves] most people…unable to reflect critically upon public education and its place within the political economy of capitalism" (p. xxviii).

It is this blind spot, this immobilization of our critical faculties to recognize, evaluate, and determine the political role that public education assumes, not only in the maintenance and construction of globalization narratives, but more importantly in the creation of our students' social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual lives that should concern us most as interpretive pedagogues. Postman (1995) warns that to significantly alter our personal and social histories, globalization does "not have to be true in a scientific sense" (p. 7). He asks his reader to consider that "the measure of a narrative's 'truth' or 'falsity' is in its consequences: Does it provide people with a sense of a community life, a basis for moral conduct, explanations of that which cannot be known?" (p. 7). The questions this research challenges me to ask are, "What type of learner is created by an educational system that foremost serves a global economy with consumerist imperatives?" "What impact do we have on students who begin to see their classmates as expendable to our desire to achieve and produce?"

The problematization of the globalization narrative informing our professional psyche is about engaging in a discovery and understanding of the nature of our pedagogical responsiveness. Our ontological nature may be in the process of being reshaped by globalization. The language used reflects a commodification of our children, their energies, childhoods, and their education, co-opting them to serve globalization imperatives and adult neurosis relative to these order, control, and accountability fixations. In a sociological analysis of education, Wotherspoon (1998) concurs when he observes, "Canada's growing integration into new global economic and political alignments is forcing a reassessment of how education should best be employed for competitive advantage" (p. 13). Spring (1998) adds, "Without protection of their human rights, people stand naked before the forces of science, technology, and the free market." (p. 215). He cautions that "educational decisions are now guided by national standards and testing, accreditation, efficiency, and labor market needs…[and that] learning outcomes must be accounted for in relationship to their economic value" (pp. 222-223).

Is it possible not only to equip educators, but to also equip our students with an interpretive lens through which they can read and "discern what is at work in the way in which [their learning] is achieved" (Smith, 1999, p. 124). For instance, in integrating Billy in the regular classroom, his classmates will need to learn both the self-discipline not to become distracted by Billy's disruptions, and the patience and compassion to periodically sacrifice their own interests in order to assist Billy in gaining the focus he needs so that he too can succeed in a friendly, mutually supportive classroom environment rather than fail in one that is defined by the competitive discourses that accountability, testing, and misbehaviour assume through a globalization lens. Is the integration of Billy even a realistic or fair expectation to place on his teachers in this intensified, dishonest accountability climate? Can we create a pedagogy that assists our students and ourselves in finding the spaces we require in order to question how it can be otherwise? Can an interpretive pedagogy assist us in comparing and contrasting the fundamental premises of an educational system that focuses on developing citizens who are employable to the greater benefit and glory of a globalized economic system with one that attempts to develop citizens with the caring, understanding, and skills necessary to live life well?

It is not my purpose to suggest that everything is wrong with globalization. There are positive aspects that must be explored. However, this study concerns itself with the emerging sense that globalization has become adopted as a public truth with the power to determine government policy, individual life choices, and that it has the power to circumscribe and impoverish an unexamined pedagogy. There is some sense here of the contested nature that the globalization narrative can and does take; as such, there is a call for an interpretive pedagogy that understands it as such. Smith (1999) reminds his reader that irrespective of its present influences, "we can be thankful that globalization is just a theory, because as such, it can be re-thought" (p. 4). It is this permission to rethink and respond pedagogically that this study attempts to explore. The questions remain, “Do teachers identify globalization as contested or uncontested space?” “How does this narrative orient their pedagogy if at all, and how does their understanding of globalization impact their own and their students' well-being, if indeed it does?"

In this intensified educational climate with its apparent contradictory messaging, is it even fair to expect teachers to exercise their personal and professional agency such that they begin to or continue to practice pedagogies of caring? The hopefulness articulated in this paper has been and continues to be, that as an educational leader, to do so is necessary. Remaining pedagogically responsive to students and their continued intellectual, social, emotional, and physical wellbeings, notwithstanding the "new global economy" with particular demands and opportunities, is the work to which I both "knowingly" and unwittingly committed when I became an educational leader.

The leadership that I try to practice as I engage in conflict resolution attempts in which I am asked to decide or to be involved in a decision to exclude or impugn a student for underperformance or for misbehaviour is referenced by this globalization discourse to which I have been exposed, and by the discourses on childhood, and on curriculum as previously discussed. These learnings that have come to infuse my decision-making abilities with pause, caution, discernment and struggle surface the following question: "How does an educational leader engage meaningfully in the theorization of educational practice, and then bring back to the educational community the unconcealments that such theorization surfaces in ways that are relevant, significant, and meaningful within a zone of acceptable practices and discourses, especially during moments of conflict resolution over children and their educations?" Smith (2002) suggests that "a hermeneutic question would be, how can [my] experiences be rendered into terms comprehensible" to my colleagues whom I am expected to lead? (p. 187) I heard it said once that the real work of the pilgrim is to embark on the pilgrimage (of which I think leadership is), but it is to also bring the wisdom and understandings gained from such experience back to the world of action such that gained epiphanies strike relevant, significant, and meaningful cords for those who dwell in the world of action, suffering, ambiguity, tension, and conflict. It is this second task of the work of leadership that has been and remains my struggle, especially within our current, intensified educational environments that are suffused with the ambiguous, contradictory messaging that the globalization discourse is encouraging.

Chapter IX

A Superintendent's Reflections on the Search for Pedagogical Intent

Throughout this dissertation research a number of questions have been raised: Some addressed through the narratives themselves, others tackled directly, and others left in their speculative form. This study began with a search for meaning relative to the struggle in my leadership with remaining pedagogically centered during attempts at conflict resolution. Throughout this study, this question of how one attends to the pedagogical impulse found its horizon in conflict as it is experienced in the real-life situations of students, teachers, principals, and superintendents, and as it came to be recalled autobiographically through composite narratives. This search for a deeper understanding of pedagogical intent enabled me to propose the following theses.

Pedagogical Intent Re-conceptualizes Conflict as a Learning Opportunity

A concern about the struggle to address the call for expedient, quick fixes to normal adult/child confrontation was surfaced through an examination of the various discourses of childhood, curriculum, and globalization, and the power relations that reverberate throughout conflict situations.[8] This examination placed into play the autobiographical narratives with these discourses in a philosophical hermeneutic desire to understand what these narratives and the struggles that I have experienced in my leadership roles disclose to me about pedagogical intent, and about my desire to remain faithful to it. The source of this question is that notwithstanding the many "detractors" that exist in the educational landscape such as unionism, accountability, efficiency, effectiveness, and staff relations—a topic that by and large monopolizes the leadership literature—I am hopeful that leadership in education remains first and foremost about pedagogical intent as defined by van Manen (1991) as an orientation and thoughtfulness towards the wellbeing of children. Steven Smith (1989) in his dissertation entitled *Risk and the Playground* has also influenced the call to this current dissertation research and my understanding of pedagogy as "a theory addressed to the individual child" (p. 27). Smith suggests that "pedagogy should be built up and formulated from the concrete situation of adult and child" (p. 202). He adds that with regards to the playground, pedagogy struggles with how to "help the child to enlarge the space of the playground. How can the child gain self-confidence, self-knowledge, movement, proficiency and feelings of self-worth in activities such as games, sport and physical recreation that lie beyond the playground" (p. 209)?

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[8] This call arises from simplistic views of teaching and learning that ignore the current social structures in which children are raised and socialized, and by professionals who remain committed to a view that the original difficulties that arise out of a heterogeneous society should not be their problem.

If one understands pedagogy as conceptualized by Smith and van Manen, then with regard to conflict resolution, this narrative study suggests that one asks the question, "How do we use conflict situations to improve the child's educative experiences so that the child emerges feeling valued, respected, and more capable of participating successfully? In the narratives involving Jolene and Robert, their superintendents, Jim and Terry, respectively, searched for solutions that would, for example, enable Jolene to recognize and seek help as needed for future improprieties she might suffer, and that would help Robert take responsibility for his learning through mutual respect and cooperation. Notwithstanding this desire that the wellbeing of the child remains central to the question of pedagogical intent, this research has caused me to re-examine what that wellbeing means, how it gets defined, and who defines it: Which brings me to a second thesis.

Pedagogical Intent is Realized Through Practical Wisdom

One might think that the educational leader defines what the wellbeing of the child means during moments of conflict resolution where as leader he/she is called upon to help resolve situations. The narratives do reveal that there is this aspect of telling and expecting that occurs, and that indeed educational leaders must be prepared to fulfill this role of helping to define pedagogical intent; however, the narratives and the analysis that follow also reveal the way in which leaders are confined in their actions by community values, staff relations, union and contract expectations, parent demands, and political beliefs. When I began this study, I was interested in discovering something more definitive about the way I as an educational leader can go about the work of resolving conflict with pedagogical intent. Indeed, in the writing of this dissertation I found myself often resorting to cathartic moments of moving beyond the telling that occurred within the narratives themselves to even further tell others what to do in the analysis of the composite narratives. There was this reoccurring desire for me to be able to discover a very definitive explanation of pedagogical intent and to be able to say that this is how leaders resolve conflict pedagogically. With the felt demands in education on the leader to maintain an orderly, operative educational system that quiets complaint, achieves results, and solves problems expediently, I found myself resorting to a comfortable zone of thinking I know what it means to be custodial over children. The urgency to resort to telling others what needs to be done in order to achieve the pedagogical goal as I think it looks in given situations has been ever present in this writing and very difficult to move beyond.

By the time one becomes a leader in educational settings, one has had much experience in working with children, hopefully on their behalves. As an educator of 22 years I have some sense of what I think it takes to be successful with children; thus, when I find myself in conflict situations involving other professionals with children, it becomes quite a challenge to not simply resort to "fixing the problem" by telling and expecting. However, viewing these narratives through a hermeneutic interpretation has revealed that the work of leadership is about much more than telling; to the point, the philosophical hermeneutic orientation reveals that the above mentioned "detractors" such as unions, teachers, parents, and politicians are much more than simply being detractors. Indeed, they are significant, contributing members of the educational community, and they, too, play a significant role in defining for what it is that pedagogy stands and how pedagogical intent gets enacted. They are the "thou" in the philosophical hermeneutic interpretive, and as a superintendent, I stand in a dialogical relationship with them, especially during attempts at conflict resolution involving children. In remaining focused on this question of pedagogical intent, it is important to remember that leaders are both bound by the educational communities that selected them as their leaders, and that yet they are expected to bring focus, relevance, and empowerment to the educational communities they lead. These contradictory expectations disquiet the leadership role since as superintendent, one is expected to enable expedient, satisfactory solutions to problems while at the same time one is expected to share ownership over what defines these solutions as satisfactory, more to the point of this research, as pedagogical. This research has revealed to me that the diffuse nature of leadership authority is an essential feature of being able to develop the practical wisdom that successful leaders need in order to mediate well between the abnormal and normal conversations that occur regularly in educational communities.

The narratives and analysis that followed them reveal that conflict is infused with a surplus of intentions; as such, what is relevant and meaningful remains ambiguous and requires constant interpretation. This research did not quiet my call for easy definitions; instead, it challenged such a call and returned pedagogical intent back to its original difficulty. This hermeneutic research reminds me that educational leadership is about being caught in media res—caught in the middle of action. It is important to remember that although these composite narratives have enabled this research, they do not represent the overall conversation that reveals pedagogical intent in the educational communities from which these composites achieve their grounding. The sub-phrase in the title of this research dissertation, *conversations with uncertainty at the limit situation*, borrows from the deconstructive literature and is a reminder that these narratives actually represent a particular discourse that occurs when pedagogical practice is met at its limit situation—that point at which the way that pedagogy is being practiced gets called into question by those whom it appears to be marginalizing. This conversation, represents the abnormal, not the total conversation about pedagogical intent. Gallagher (1992) notes that "one cannot pedagogize the abnormal; one can only allow the abnormal—the paralogic—to emerge within study, within conversations, which is always constrained by the process of tradition" (p. 313).

It is interpretive to recall that within the educational communities that ground these autobiographical narratives there is also an ongoing "normal" conversation about pedagogical intent. This is the conversation that is "characterized by commensurability and is conducted within an agreed-upon set of conventions about what counts as a relevant contribution" (p. 309). Pedagogical intent is defined by the ongoing day-to-day interactions that teachers and children have, that parents and teachers have, and that I as an educational leader have with unions, teachers, principals, trustees, and parents on a regular basis. Gallagher reminds his reader that consensus such as the day-to-day conversations that occur and that shape pedagogical intent "can only be one temporary state of conversation which must eventually issue in paralogy and the heterogeneity of language games. Consensus is merely local, tentative, and temporary" (p. 308). He also notes, however, that abnormal discourse can only occur in relationship to normal discourse, and that phronesis is the practical wisdom necessary to mediate between these two discourses and to engage in this conversation capably (pp. 310-311).

For instance, in the globalization discussion surrounding the narrative on Billy, I came to acknowledge that the inconsistent messaging that I am giving to teachers and principals regarding what counts about student achievement, accountability, and pedagogy forms part of the normalizing conversation about what is important in education. Unfortunately, this accountability discourse, as previously discussed, is characteristically contradictory, superficial, and consequently complicit in conflict regarding pedagogical action. I have come to see that the normalizing conversations leaders have with their staffs and communities become voiced in what may be regrettable ways through a teacher's pedagogical responses with students. It must be recognized here, that as the educational leader of the learning community, I helped to create the urgency for accountability. The way that I have shared messages around this issue as it relates or fails to relate to student wellbeing and to pedagogical action might actually be receiving voice during the paralogic conversation involving Mrs. Dalloway and Billy: Voice that I as a leader must now acknowledge and confront for its marginalizing effects on students.

Specific to the question of pedagogical intent, another aspect of the normal discourse in education is the way we structure schools to achieve certain agreed upon outcomes for a majority of students (the dialogue is more recently re-conceptualizing this goal as being inclusive of all students) by establishing generally agreed upon roles and responsibilities for parents, teachers, students, and educational leaders. This normal conversation also includes expectations of orderliness and cooperation so that a few teachers can successfully educate a number of students, and so that there is a sense of safety, wellbeing, achievement, and dependability in school culture. All three superintendents in the composite narratives included in this study were aware of this ongoing conversation about what pedagogy looks like and achieves, and at times they each felt constrained by this conversation and somewhat resentful of it.

This research has revealed for me, as an educational leader, that this sense of constraint is a necessary part of leading in an educational community, and that it is what acting through practical wisdom entails. The hermeneutic literature reminds me that pedagogical leadership is always interpretive work because pedagogy is a social event, and it is played out in the social arena. It receives relevance, significance, and meaning socially through mediation between both the normal and abnormal conversations mentioned above. Because there is a surplus of meanings and intentions infusing pedagogical action, the work of the superintendent remains interpretive, but the narratives also reveal that leadership must take a position, as Jim, Terry, and Jerry did, regarding what about pedagogy gets expressed and what about it gets suppressed. I think that when Gadamer discusses practical wisdom—phronesis—he is talking about knowing when to take a stance and what to take it over so that the decisions that an educational leader makes are judicial, and are understood as such. Gadamer says that one "must rely on a correct interpretation which necessarily includes the mediation between history and the present in the act of understanding itself" (p. xxxii).

There clearly are events when a teacher behaves un-pedagogically, and these events need to be addressed by leadership if not addressed by the teacher. Although the composite narratives were taken to represent such events, whether or not they do, the superintendents in the narratives felt that it was time to act. The intent of this dissertation is not to quibble over where within the pedagogic/un-pedagogic dialectic these particular events fall; rather, the point is that when a superintendent believes that an act is un-pedagogic some action is required to address the situation. What this study reveals is that to remain faithful to pedagogical intent one acts with practical wisdom in a way that enables pedagogical action for students as agreed to by the educational community one serves, but also that one respects the challenges regarding one's pedagogical responsiveness as it is called into question by the presenting limit situations of that pedagogy.

Pedagogical Intent Involves Risking the Self on the Other's Behalf

In my own leadership practice, I struggle over the ability to act with practical wisdom during attempts at conflict resolution. The superintendents in the composite narratives struggled with this same challenge in their leadership practice as they found themselves situated within communities with pre-determined notions about what teaching and learning ought to look and feel like. An educational leader operates within the tensionality between his/her tacit and cognitive understandings of pedagogical intent, and within the potentially more dramatic tensionality that exists amongst the various educational players—teachers, parents, students, and the community—and their implicit sense of pedagogy.

In educational leadership a real struggle occurs, as it did for Jerry, when there is a tangible difference between the leader's sense and understanding of pedagogical intent and the understanding and sense that others in the educational community hold. Leadership walks a fine balance in these situations between advocating for children and acquiescing to the beliefs of the community. Conflict stretches this balance and really speaks to the interiority of leadership relative to this pedagogic project. When the professional lexicon in the learning community appears to abrogate pedagogical intent the work of leadership intensifies as witnessed by Jerry in the narrative on Billy, the grade one student, and his need to belong to the learning community from which he was being displaced.

The autobiographical narratives reveal that quite often, prevailing discourses come to be understood in an educational community in very literal ways that challenge and stretch our pedagogic commitments. The discourses of curriculum and achievement, of adult authority over children, and of "zero tolerance" are conceptually agreed upon ones that oversimplify the complexities of adult-child interaction today where hierarchical arrangements between adults and children are actually more diffuse than what is said and understood as public truths. Yet, during conflict, there is a simplistic retreat to an uninspired reliance upon hierarchical, adult authority, and there is a denial of the child's struggle for relevance. The way educational leaders deal with these situations comments significantly on their own orientation towards pedagogy. Throughout this study there is a discovery about the way educational leadership involves risk-taking in the form of risking oneself on the other's behalf. This risking in the form of compromising, directing, and empowering is about interpretation and tentatively held decision-making that places a leader's understanding regarding pedagogical intent (as in being oriented towards the wellbeing of children) into play with the particular situations in which leadership finds itself. This risk-taking on another's behalf is also what causes me, as an educational leader, to question my decisions, and to anticipate how well the overall educational community I serve will receive these decisions. Remaining centered on the question about pedagogical intent reveals that this doubting is a necessary aspect of conversing through conflict resolution attempts. It is a characteristic of grounding that helps to nurture the development of the practical wisdom one needs in order to make decisions that remain relevant and acceptable, and that at the same time are pedagogically centered.

Pedagogical Intent Ruptures Identity

Notwithstanding the above, what I have come to understand throughout this research is that leadership must be careful that it is not simply using its position to privilege a personally preferred or uncritically adopted scenario. I refer back to van Manen's (1991) discussion on *The Tact of Teaching* where he notes that it is possible to violate pedagogical intent because "it is hard sometimes to distinguish between pedagogical intent and motives which are somehow tangled up in our own being: our personal life histories, our frustrations, victories, secret wishes, ambitions, fears, insecurities, desires, hopes" (p. 22).

This question of undisclosed teaching identities has been raised in this dissertation as an impediment to pedagogical intent. Bracher (2002), in *Identity and Desire in the Classroom* delineates four pedagogies that emerge out of various teaching desires. An authoritarian pedagogy requires students to identify with "a particular authority's ideals or values" (p. 104). For students whose identities are already shaped around the teaching desire of the authoritarian pedagogue, assimilation occurs without struggle; conversely, "students who do not already have these elements as components of their identities are coerced and/or cajoled to make them such" (p. 104) in order that they may gain recognition and acceptance or these students suffer various forms of "underperformance" and exclusion as experienced by Jolene, Robert, and Billy. Teachers practiced in the art of authoritarianism as pedagogy may lose sight of the formal educational aims, pursuing instead "their own desire for recognition…in displays of their own learning and intelligence designed to elicit the admiration of their students" (p. 105). Students schooled by authoritarian pedagogues adopt fundamentalist approaches to learning and thinking.

Establishment pedagogues identify with official bodies of knowledge as unquestionable authorities, and they seek to have their students do likewise. Their passion for the subject or their eloquence in communicating impressive bodies of knowledge motivates students to gain like facility over the knowledge systems being legitimated. This pedagogy offers students "club membership" as they gain facility with the knowledge system at hand irrespective of its relevance. Students may spend much of their lives engaged in trivial learning tasks "not because of [their] value for addressing human needs or solving problems, but simply because of [their] social currency in a particular sphere" (p. 107). Though mainstream students orient more easily to the legitimated knowledge systems and achieve well because of the identity fit, unfortunately,

> students such as women, minorities, and others who have significant identity components that are devalued by…the more general educational or cultural system of which the teacher's system is a part, may resist learning because to learn would be to sacrifice crucial identity components (p. 108).

In the narrative involving Robert, this issue of curriculum relevance both in the formal and informal curricula of the school became significant schooling features that may have been complicit in Robert's struggle with his teacher. A significant pedagogical impediment for the superintendent is that in the absence of discussion about teaching identities and desires, it becomes very difficult to conceptualize misbehaviour as a form of critique over pedagogy because pedagogy gets taken for granted and becomes unavailable, as such, for examination.

Bracher (2002) further discusses what he terms as resistance pedagogies that identify with marginalized groups. This pedagogy is featured as one that can easily be constructed around a teacher's own identity issues such that in its restrictive practice, it serves as, what Bracher notes is common practice, another form of authoritarian or establishment pedagogy that "encourages [students] to invest their identities almost exclusively in the subaltern categories and thus ignore other capacities and attributes" (p. 109). Once again, an unexamined resistance pedagogy may be more about a teacher's own identity and crisis issues than it is about pedagogical responsiveness to children and their learning potential.

A related pedagogy, a critical pedagogy is distinguished by Bracher as one that is animated by the "teachers' desire for identity itself—more specifically, their desire for a strong *identity for their students*, whose own desire for identity the teachers have identified with" (p. 110). Students and teachers engage in identity mapping around their own ethnicities and histories, and their relational significance to the identities being privileged by legitimated knowledge systems. Critical pedagogies are based upon the premise that unlike the previous three teaching desires that are constructed around teaching needs to the benefit or harm of students, the critical pedagogies satisfy the teacher only if they benefit the student's own sense of self. Yet, Bracher demonstrates that "in the absence of an adequate theory of the nature of identity and of how it is developed and altered" (p. 114), even critical pedagogies become alienating to students whose teachers believe they are practicing a critical pedagogy of liberation when, in actuality, they may merely be serving the teacher's own desire for identity recognition as this desire becomes projected onto students in unexamined ways.

A case in point regarding the crippling nature of unexamined teaching identities is the once well-publicized Strathcona-Tweedsmiur experience where seven students were killed in an avalanche as a consequence of an unwitting pedagogy of harm. In a recent presentation to the British Columbia School Trustees Association, Cloutier (2003) outlined the events that led up to this tragic loss of student life. He noted how the pressures in outdoor education programming, combined with the personalities of individual teachers and parents who confuse their own personal desires to pursue the extreme, actually serve to condition schools to package dangerous adventure education programs with unintentional, misunderstood risk and expectation. Schools market these programs to trusting students and parents as elitist character-building programs. Strathcona-Tweedsmiur's program was an "exclusive" program that enjoyed a strong reputation amongst staff, parents, students, and the community regarding its outdoor education program that included survival training in rough mountainous terrain. Notwithstanding the high avalanche alerts that the teacher leader received prior to embarking on the fatal trip being discussed, Cloutier (2003) concluded that the teacher's unexamined personal identity regarding his perceived personal level of skill (also known as ego) and his own personal disregard for risk in favor of extreme adventure, pressures from students who were incapable of assessing the dangers, and the school's reputation as an exclusive outdoor educational institution all contributed towards this teacher's inability to act pedagogically over students' lives. Even after the accident occurred, there was a sustained lack of willingness by the adults to take responsibility for the poor decisions that were made. Justifications regarding the character-building nature of this program were used to excuse these students' deaths. It took a grieving grandfather to point out that one cannot build character with a dead child. The investigation that followed supported the need to distinguish high-risk, adventure education activity from outdoor educational programming in order to protect students.

In her article on Levinas' philosophy on education, Abunuwara (1998) discusses the unknowable other as the possibility for keeping pedagogy reflective and self-critical through continuous engagement in an ethical relationship with the student as the unknowable other, almost as in a never-ending conversation of distantiation. For teachers to believe that they can comprehend their students "denies the fact that the Other, if it is Other, remains absolutely exterior to the Self. Comprehension creates a totality, and to comprehend the Other is to 'totalize' them" (p. 147). Common understandings of teaching would assume that good teaching is about utilizing effective assessment practices to know the student better than the student knows him/herself. Indeed, teaching does require this aspect of assessing and decision-making, but to assume a totalizing knowledge of a student's interiority is to ignore what Lacan identifies as this unknowable other. Abunuwara explains that in the ethical relationship, the teacher desires the student not as something that can be possessed or known; rather, the student is desired for the perspectives that he/she brings to the teacher that remain "forever beyond her reach" (p. 150). The teacher still has knowledge and skill that the student may require or yearn, but "to give priority to the ethical relation in education means to value discourse, in the Levinasian sense, above comprehension" (p. 151).

What the narratives, the analyses that followed them, and the discourses that enabled this research reveal about pedagogical intent is that because pedagogy can become easily confused with personal identities and desires, it is important that pedagogical intent be conceptualized as a conversation that takes place within community.

For instance, in my own leadership practice, I tend to remain more popular with parents, students, and trustees than I am with teachers and principals because of the decisions that I make. What this study reveals for me is that this issue of popularity does not mean that I am necessarily more or less pedagogical than teachers or principals, it may simply mean that what I bring to this discussion regarding pedagogy is accepted by some and rejected or questioned by others as part of an ongoing conversation. This study reveals that I must tentatively interpret this ongoing conversation of which I am a part so that I can make the decisions I am called to make as an educational leader as I struggle to develop the practical wisdom it takes for me to judiciously mediate between the pedagogical traditions that are historically situated, the communal pedagogical sense, and the presenting situations that call for interpretation and action. I have been reminded in various ways that speaking on behalf of a child for the child's wellbeing can take many forms, and that I as an educational leader do not hold special discerning powers over and above others. I simply have a role that requires action as best as I understand that action to be at any given moment. A principal once cautioned me that in resolving conflict we can confuse pedagogy for a desire to please: "A desire to be everything to everyone at the expense of being nothing to anyone". This was his way of expressing van Manen's caution that we sometime conflate pedagogical intent with our own desires and needs.

Pedagogical Intent's Interpretive Nature Necessitates Struggle and Openness

This study also surfaced a desire for conflict-free pedagogical practice; however, as this study unfolded, it has become evident that remaining faithful towards pedagogical intent involves various ways of being engaged in conversation. Terrance Deal (1999) talks about the way educational leaders engage in conversation through culture building. During culture building or through empowering professional learning communities, one can engage in this discussion about what it means to remain committed to pedagogical intent through professional development activities. But at the limit situations of our pedagogical practice, the tenor that this conversation takes, as discovered throughout this study, is one of conflict, and of attempts at conflict resolution. Margaret Wheatley (1999), in her discussion on chaos theory, proposes that organizations discover order through chaos. She notes that leadership is about being caught in the middle of many interests, challenges, and projects at once. This study reveals that leadership is about being caught in the middle of culture building and conflict resolution. I suggest that conflict at the limit situations of our practice is a way of engaging in this ongoing conversation about pedagogical intent. I further propose that conflict is a form of culture building that reflects both an educational community's current pedagogical capacity and the interiority of its leadership. Conflict at the limit situation communicates the expectation that teaching itself is first and foremost about pedagogy. This statement is not a vindication regarding the particular ways in which the superintendents—Terry, Jim, and Jerry—found themselves engaged in conflict within the narratives, nor is it about the ways in which they handled or mishandled themselves. Much existing leadership theory and practice will critique that particular aspect of this study. Rather, it is an observation that provides support and hope for educational leadership that unavoidably finds itself in conflict over matters of pedagogical concern, and it validates the need for this struggle as part of an ongoing conversation about pedagogy. It is an observation that suggests that the desire for tension and conflict-free educational environments may be a misplaced, naïve goal that denies the undeniable indeterminacy and ambiguity that exists in practices of pedagogy.

This dissertation research puts forward that the way pedagogical intent looks and feels in any particular situation requires an unavoidable interpretive decision that is itself already situated within an ongoing dialogue about what it is that pedagogy means to children's lives. There is an hermeneutic of ambiguity inherent in pedagogical intent that precludes closure to this discussion. To wish it otherwise is naïve. Improving the pedagogical capacity of the educational community in which leadership is situated is worthwhile and challenging work. It must be remembered that besides culture building and building trust, engaging in conflict at the limit situation is also important pedagogical work.

The composite narratives reveal that pedagogy is recognized in both its presence and its absence. There is a sense in all of the narratives, especially the one involving Jolene, that an absence of pedagogy speaks loudly and clearly to one attuned to children and their wellbeing. Educational leadership is about addressing such absence and restoring children's sense of wellbeing, their need for security, validation, and relevance. Robert's failure to experience relevance speaks loudly in the narrative, and Terry's attempt to restore Robert's sense of belonging and meaningful participation is the work of educational leadership. This is not to say that Terry engaged in this work in the best way possible; others will critique the technical skill relevant to sound leadership practice, but Terry's enactment of the conversation regarding what it is for which pedagogy stands is important leadership work that involves risking oneself for others by taking a stance with the community as an educational leader. This work is interpretive and it stands to be critiqued by others, but what I learn from this discussion is that there is a relevant place for this work within this conversation regarding pedagogy.

This study suggests that in a professional environment, one may need to be less concerned about how things get done and more concerned about why they get done. "What is it about pedagogy that Terry was trying to restore and address?" may be a more relevant question to pedagogical intent than is the question that asks, "How did he go about doing it?" There is much literature on how one should go about engaging professionals in change, about how one leads from the bottom-up by empowerment, and about building trust. Deal (1999) suggests that successful school cultures are "based on respect, trust, and shared power relations among staff" (p. 7). Hargreaves (1994) talks about how well intended change should "respect teachers' discretionary judgments, promote their professional growth, and support their efforts" (p. 3). Fullan (2001) suggests that "leaders must be consummate relationship builders" (p. 5).

Dufour and Eaker (1998) note that professional learning communities are characterized by "mutual cooperation" and "emotional support" (p. xii). In fairness to these authors, if one reads into the deeper layers of their discussions, one can also conclude that each professional is responsible to build cultures of professionalism and to behave pedagogically. However, it is my experience that many principals and teachers are familiar with this literature and will use it superficially to justify their decisions or to discredit critique, especially during moments of disagreement or during attempts at conflict resolution. These principals and teachers often remind leaders that trust and support are important features of a successful professional atmosphere. It is my experience that when I sense a need to engage in a discussion about why we are doing what we do or why we are not doing something we maybe ought to be doing, a lot of energy gets spent on demonstrating that I may have failed to engage in the discussion the "right way" according to the leadership literature instead of focusing on the question raised. It has been my experience that this literature has actually created a bit of a victimization discourse in educational settings that dis-empowers leadership while empowering much expectation, hurt, and refusal.

For example, from the narratives, one sees that energy is misdirected in educational settings today by this overemphasis on the technical skill of leadership, even with regard to the question of leadership attempts to address issues of pedagogical intent. This leadership language has the potential to be used as a discourse by teachers and principals to unwittingly or otherwise distract leadership from the pedagogical project, especially during conflict resolution. The narratives point to concerns over whether or not natural justice was followed appropriately or over whether or not one is trusted or supported by an educational leader, focusing attention away from the key issue of whether or not the actions in question were pedagogical. I am proposing that the overemphasis that we have placed in education on supporting professional decisions actually serves as a discourse of power that distracts a professional community from its main obligation of pedagogical relevance towards children. Our leadership has to be about enabling pedagogical practice, and our support for professionals ought to be about supporting them in their ability to work pedagogically with children. Questioning decisions and disagreeing with other educators can be an important part of that work; but, there needs to be some understanding that this questioning and disagreeing is part of the necessary, ongoing conversation required to ensure that we remain faithful to children and to their presenting call for responsiveness.

There is an unfortunate lack of acceptance that the abnormal conversation, the paralogic discussion, is a necessary part of the overall conversation that takes place in educational settings concerned with pedagogical responsiveness. When the paralogic discussion is not understood as such or is rejected as unnecessary, feelings of being victimized surface. This study reveals that, consequently, in educational communities, questioning and disagreeing are seen as a lack of support and a lack of trust on the part of leaders. What I am suggesting is that we need to re-conceptualize support and trust to include disagreement, questioning, and refusal. Just as pedagogy practiced well opportunes students to encounter themselves as individuals with dignity and worth, talents, capabilities, and learning needs, when one reviews the narratives in this study, it becomes apparent that a professional community really encounters itself and is itself encountered through both an absence of pedagogical practice, and also through its enactment of such practice. This community also encounters itself by how well it questions or fails to question its enactments of pedagogy. Educational leadership is about addressing the absence of pedagogical practice, and it is about empowering its presence, but in order for this work to be meaningful within the professional community it needs to be accepted as an aspect of leadership and professionalism.

Pedagogical Intent Originates From and Returns One to the Child's Call

In his work entitled *Truth and Method*, Gadamer states, "one does not question unless there is something to be questioned" (p. 375). If conflict is looked upon as a question about one's pedagogical practice, the question "What about pedagogical intent addresses us during conflict situations?" that emerged throughout this study calls for consideration. In keeping with the question of how one remains faithful to pedagogical intent, a philosophical hermeneutic of enquiry has placed the narratives and the analysis of various language discourses into play such that what really gets questioned by pedagogical intent during conflict at the limit situation is both the pedagogue and pedagogy itself. Van Manen (1991) talks about the way children reflect back to us who we are. It is through children that our pedagogical practices become tentatively objectified and known. What is questioned during conflict is the level of self-awareness that the pedagogue brings to each situation, each encounter with children. Pedagogy unaware of itself runs the risk of becoming unreflectively epistemological and irrelevant to the child's presenting call for adequate responsiveness; conversely, a pedagogy that practices self-reflection and that uses conflict as an opportunity to become self-aware assumes an ontological incompleteness that restores the hermeneutic structure of enquiry to pedagogical practice. It is in this way that one remains faithful to the child's presenting call: The call that addresses the pedagogue during moments of conflict.

It is this hermeneutic sense of pedagogy as an evolving yet faithful project that provides both challenge and ambiguity, but also hopefulness and significance to educational leadership. This dissertation research reveals that one never merely employs a fixed, predetermined pedagogic response; rather, one re-presents pedagogy with each enactment of it in the particular educative moment. The back and forth tensionality between the ethic espoused at the beginning of this dissertation, the narratives, and the discourses that enabled them, reveal that the sense that pedagogical intent brings to educational leadership is that to remain faithful is to remain clearly centered on a desire to understand ourselves as leaders ever more intensely, ever differently so that we can remain relevant to children's ever changing presenting calls for pedagogical responding. This realization assists me in understanding that the ambiguity inherent in pedagogical action is what challenges leadership to remain relevant, reflective, and interpretive. One can only understand what it really is for which one's pedagogical practice stands when one looks back on his/her practice to observe the normalizing aspects of the series of pedagogical events that defines one's practice over time. During the discussion on deconstruction, it was suggested that the educational leader's work during conflict resolution is to remain suspect of the subjectivities that have contributed to the conflict situation in which he/she is involved. There is a greater deconstructive call that also surfaced in this study which was for educational leaders to remain suspicious of the subjectivities and identities that inform the decisions that arise out of any attempt at conflict resolution. It is in this way that educational leaders can remain open to examining their faithfulness to pedagogical intent during conflict resolution. In other words, one remains faithful to this project by remaining involved in the struggle for pedagogical relevance: By remaining committed to placing students, teachers, and parents first, over and above other discourses such as discourses of expertise, power, curriculum, childhood, adulthood, misbehaviour or accountability.

I like the way Trooper in their song, *Two for the Show*, (as remembered) sing this commitment to a caring, compassionate pedagogy of being:

> Waiting in the wings, the Queen of Virtue Sings,
> It will break her heart when I tell her she's out of key.
> If I gave her half a chance, she could soon learn how to dance,
> And she could earn her living gracefully.

I am left with some sense that there sounds a resonant cord in this understanding of both the importance of practicing leadership with pedagogical intent, and that this pilgrimage by its very nature is multidirectional, ambiguous, and not without tension: That this desire for pedagogical faithfulness is not only necessary, but that it is also both rewarding and worthwhile.

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